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Fight for the Franklin

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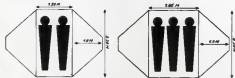
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Photo Glenn Tempest

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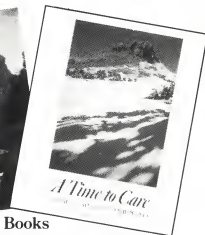
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Editorial

Fight for the Franklin

● OPPOSITION TO THE TASMANIAN Government's determination to destroy one of the world's unspoiled places is mounting almost daily, and there are a number of aspects of the Franklin affair that warrant particular examination.

The planned destruction of Tasmania's magnificent South-west is a national, indeed an international issue, and as such is the concern of all Australians, whichever side of Bass Strait they happen to live. The Federal

One interesting feature of the dams controversy has been the remarkable inconsistency with which it is possible to deploy the power of the law. Anti-dam protesters arrested on 'trespass' charges find not only that bail conditions are highly questionable, but that they are frequently held, *without conviction*, for several days on charges which carry a maximum penalty of only \$100. Even in the event of default of payment, these charges would normally incur no more

ponents of the scheme as an unemployed mainland hippy rabble, choosing to ignore the gathering stream of protest, on both sides of Bass Strait, from people in all walks of life including business, professional, academic and political fields.

That *Wild* has always supported the conservation movement in general, and the aims of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society in particular, is clear, and we believe that many of our readers are in sympathy with this editorial policy. It is not necessary for *Wild* to advise like-minded, independent individuals how they should act regarding the sad situation in South-west Tasmania. But we do urge readers to study the facts of the apparent impasse that has already lasted too long and gone too far, and suggest that each *Wild* person should consider carefully the means by which, through influence or action, an international environmental tragedy on the Franklin may be averted.

Chris Baxter
Editor & Publisher

The Franklin

When man would seek
to reach towards the stars,
if nothing greater
than the pulse of light
might ever be achieved,

and if his getting there
must therefore take
a thousand years,

or if a hundred lifetimes
first must pass
before his journey's end,

why does he strive
to first destroy
and trample down
that beauty
and that universe
which is so close at hand,
within a moment's grasp?

Why must he take the cudgel
and the sword
and see sublime creation damned,
and in a moment
thus deny
the work which nature shaped
from times before primeval man
had ever raised his eyes aloft
to wonder quietly, and revere
those dim and distant stars?

Peter Leman

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Government has intervened before in conservation matters; this time it is under an international obligation to do so again.

The schemes the Hydro-Electric Commission proposes Tasmanians should gratefully accept are not necessary. Demand for power has decreased during each of the last two years; the amount of power to be produced at such great environmental cost is small (the dam would produce only 180 megawatts) and there are alternative means of power production that should be fully investigated and considered.

It should be drawn to the attention of all, that despite the impression given, the scheme planned for the Franklin area includes a second major dam and additional small dams. The combined effect would be to flood all of both the Franklin and Gordon Rivers and a number of other rivers in the area, including the Jane.

than a maximum of two days' imprisonment! Yet people arrested and pleading 'guilty' to assaulting the Tasmanian Wilderness Society Director, Dr Bob Brown, received only suspended sentences and work orders: none will spend time in jail!

Tasmanian authorities appear to have taken inadequate precautions to prevent violence against demonstrators. Not only was Dr Brown assaulted, but TWS property has been repeatedly damaged and an attempt was made to damage a demonstrator's plane at a local airport. Authorities permitted the dangerous and provocative breaking of a line of demonstrators in rubber rafts by a bulldozer-laden barge, and the TWS telephone in Strahan was mysteriously disconnected immediately before the first bulldozer was due to be taken up-river.

In desperate efforts to discredit the anti-dam movement, the Tasmanian Government has sought to paint op-

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Wild Information

Tasmanian Dams Issue Hots Up



● **Franklin Blockade.** As the most prominent leading edge of the campaign to prevent the construction of a hydro-electric dam on the lower Gordon River and to save the South-west Tasmanian wilderness, the Tasmanian Wilderness Society blockade is proving itself to be one of the most extraordinary events ever to occur in Tasmania and a major milestone for the conservation movement.

The blockade, aimed at generating national and international publicity for the issue and to slow down, and if possible halt, work on the proposed dam, is the largest and best-organized civil disobedience action yet embarked upon by conservationists in Australia.

Major blockading actions during the first month of the blockade were on the Crotty Road and at Warners Landing, a partly constructed wharf on the Gordon River on which it is proposed to unload bulldozers and other heavy equipment.

On the first day of the blockade about 50 people were arrested at the Sir John Falls

Hydro-Electric Commission construction camp as they swarmed ashore carrying garbage bags to clean up rubbish left around the camp. The police have at times been flummoxed by blockaders sporadically appearing out of the HEC dam foundation investigation tunnels at the dam site itself, and materializing at the Sir John Falls, immediately behind the police camp.

One month after the start of the blockade, over 500 people had been arrested, most of them on charges of trespassing on HEC land. Notably, there has been no violence at all during arrests, although several conservationists, including TWS Director and Member of Parliament Dr Bob Brown, have been bashed by pro-dam locals. All blockaders must undergo at least three days' training in non-violent action techniques and tactics before going into action.

People arrested in the first month of the blockade include Pierre Slicer, well-known Hobart solicitor, Nick Goldie, endorsed Democrat candidate for Bass, Claudio Alcorso, millionaire businessman, Mrs Betty Downie, a seventy-year-old grandmother and archaeologist, Jules Davison, a polio victim who was arrested in his wheelchair on three separate occasions, Andrew Lohrey, a



Blockade of Warners Landing on Tasmania's Gordon River, and right, award-winning Tasmanian author James McQueen after his arrest on the Crotty Road, South-west Tasmania. Photos Tasmanian Wilderness Society, and right, Geoff Bull

former Tasmanian Labor Government Minister for National Parks, Dr Bob Brown, Director of the TWS, David Gray, a Labor Party MP from Victoria, and author James McQueen and his son Stewart (aged 14).

The blockade has been rich in humour and irony, although this has largely been overshadowed by the drama of the situation. For example, upon finding that the police officer arresting him was a Senior Constable Pedder, Victorian MP David Gray stated, 'I bet this is a first — a Pedder arresting a Gray'.

There is no doubt that the applied bushcraft and bush skills of the blockaders are superior to those of the authorities. Here are those who love the bush and the South-west, fighting for it not only with the normal tools of a political campaign but also with the bush skills, imagination and ingenuity in

beekeepers, who depend upon the leatherwood trees in the stands of rainforest. According to a recent Forestry Commission survey, ANM wastes twice as much eucalypt pulp per hectare as it harvests. A mere 320 hectares of plantation forests on a 40-year rotation for pulp, and 50 hectares of plantation for sawlog, would yield an equivalent gain without threatening the integrity of a prime walking and ecological area. So why not leave it as it is?

Bob Burton

• **Prince Speaks Out.** Prince Philip surprised many when he spoke out against the proposed Franklin dam recently. He said, 'When I die the Lower Gordon will be written all over me. I have been to Tasmania several times in the last ten years. The State Government

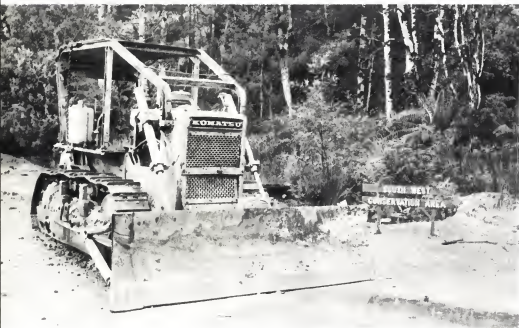
the Federal Government and the State Government on control of the World Heritage Area. The mining industry is keen to see the mine proceed as a test case for allowing mining in all Tasmania's National Parks.

The likely attitude of the State Government in negotiations with the Federal Government is 'if we can build a dam in a World Heritage Area, what's wrong with a tiny mine?'

BB

• **'No Dams' Echoes Throughout Australia.** Writing an update on the campaign to stop the flooding of Tasmania's Franklin River is a daunting task. Rather than a problem of what to write, it is a problem of what to exclude.

In Sydney, 4,000 hardy souls marched through a torrential downpour to register



Say no more! Bob Burton

which they excel to a much greater degree than the authorities.

Without doubt, whatever the future of the blockade itself, a great deal more will come out of it, and the whole campaign, than just the saving of the Franklin River and the preservation of the South-west wilderness.

Ross Scott

• **Mt Anne Under Siege.** The Forestry Commission of Tasmania has proposed that the area around Mt Anne in the headwaters of the Huon River catchment be dedicated as State Forest for eventual clear-felling by Australian Newsprint Mills (ANM).

The proposal is one which, by Tasmanian standards, is a run of the mill proposition — it is economically insane, environmentally outrageous and logically twisted.

The area borders the South West National Park which was recently accepted on the World Heritage List, and flanks the Mt Anne area which harbours one of the few untouched stands of King Billy Pine and alpine vegetation. Forestry activities would threaten the survival of the greatest attractions of Mt Anne by the long-term use of fire as a management practice, as well as further intruding on the aesthetics of the area.

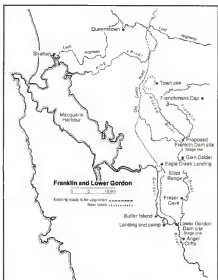
It is estimated that, over a 50-year period, twice as much money could be earned by leaving the area as it is for the use of

wants to develop something that has been dedicated as World Heritage. Then there is the economic argument that the State needs the power because that is the only way that it will attract industry. It's not a frightfully convincing argument but that is it'.

Mr Goodluck, a Tasmanian Liberal backbencher who is noted for his consistent promotion of Tasmanian apples and normally a staunch royalist, suggested that the prince keep his nose out of what was purely a Tasmanian affair.

BB

• **Mining in Cradle Mountain National Park?** Early in 1982 the Geopko Company, a subsidiary of the giant multinational Peko-Wallsend, came within a whisker of being allowed to mine within the Cradle Mountain National Park. The Labor Government of the time agreed to allow them in but the company chose to withdraw in a blaze of adverse publicity. As with most Tasmanian affairs, a circular motion avoids the insecurity of the unknown. Thus, Geopko is back again knocking on the doors of those willing to 'rip it all up'. And the newly elected Gray Liberal Government is willing to go along with it whilst waiting for clarification of what the listing of Cradle, along with the South-west, on the World Heritage Listing means in terms of what they can and cannot do. Whether the project proceeds depends not only on the public reaction but on negotiations between



their protest. A few weeks later 15,000 people marched through Melbourne with contingents from all over Australia. Two weeks later 40% of the people who voted at the Flinders, Victoria, by-election wrote 'NO DAMS' on their ballot papers, with all candidates supporting the saving of the Franklin. The pressure on the Federal Government to intervene grew to enormous proportions. The Treasurer, Mr Howard, was reported to have received more letters on the Franklin issue than on retrospective legislation, whilst the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, has received 16,000 letters on the issue. But conservation victories never come easy, particularly in Tasmanian affairs. Two days after the victory of the Government in the Flinders by-election the Government announced its decision: it acknowledged the power of the Government to intervene but stated that it lacked the political will (though not in as many words).

The listing of the area on the World Heritage List clarified the issue in the minds of many; if the Federal Government was unwilling to intervene to save the area, then the Australian people would. It was with a sense of indignation that the blockade of the Hydro-Electric Commission's works was launched. In the following months, as the number of people arrested for 'trespassing' on a World Heritage Area grew, the resolve in the Australian population hardened. And as the numbers of arrested mounted, publicity grew, and the ability of the Federal Government to defuse the growing debate dwindled.

Ultimately it will not be the blockade that will halt the construction of the dam but the sheer political pull that a united conservation

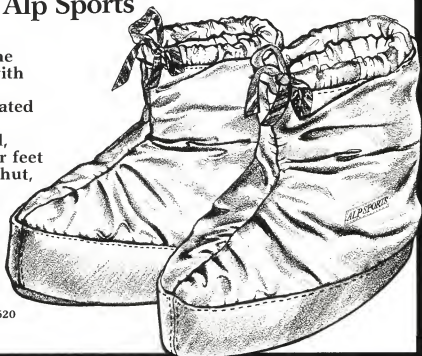
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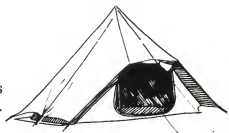
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Scenes from the recent 'No Dams' demonstration in Melbourne. Dr Bob Brown (left), Dr David Bellamy and Senator Don Chipp march with the Tasmanian Wilderness Society's protesting platypus, and left, Mr Robin Gray incognito? Bill Bachman

movement can muster. Stamina has become the key to success.

BB

● **Franklin Levy.** Ever wanted to cash in on the Franklin River boom? Apart from the equipment and advertising, if you'd like to set yourself up as a tour operator on Tasmania's threatened river you'll need up to \$1,000 for a licence. This is a new charge of a dollar a person levied by Tasmania's National Parks authorities. (Operators are restricted to 1,000 visitor-days a year.) As there are now seven licensed operators on the Franklin, this will raise a tidy sum. Perhaps it is to cover the cost of picking up demonstrators on the lower Franklin; or is it for Mr Gray's retirement fund?

● **Lake Rhona Burnt.** In case you were thinking of visiting the picturesque Lake Rhona and Denison Range in the South-west you may wish to revise your plans. On 6 November a fire ravaged the vegetation behind the Pedder-like beach. Like many fires in the South-west it was deliberately lit, but this time by one of the major logging companies, Australian Newsprint Mills.

Under legislation, ANM has control of the forested Gordon Range which flanks the eastern side of the upper Gordon River, with the boundary running down the eastern bank of the river. The western side of the river is under the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. For the last two years ANM has advocated 'hazard reduction burning' of the button grass plains near the river as a way of protecting 'their' forest concession from fires started by bushwalkers. Last year



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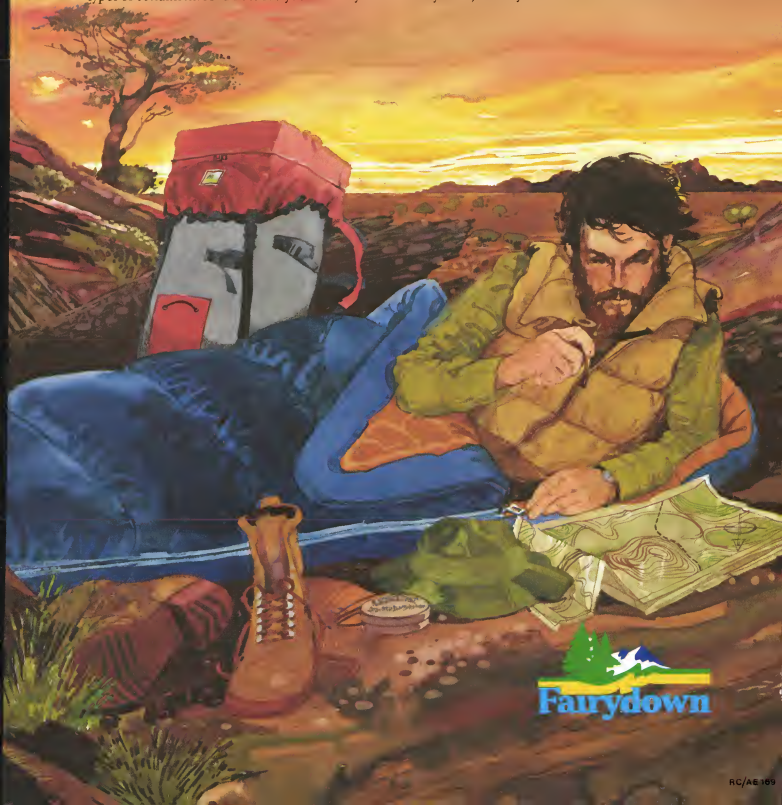
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Developers' handiwork in South-west Tasmania; top, Reeds Peak in the Denison Range after Australian Newsprint Mills' fire, above, tree near the Hartz Mountains National Park, and right, a 'hydro lake', Lake Gordon — woodchipping and drowned trees. Photos Adam Croser, Bob Burton, and right, Chris Bell

ANM burnt two of the southern plains, despite the protest of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. This year the TWS was excluded from any discussion of the proposed fire management plan for the area.

On 4 November ANM and the Tasmanian Fire Service burnt several plains to the west of the river and decided that since the conditions were favourable they would cross the river and burn the plains on the eastern side. That this was done against the wishes of the NPWS, or that it was illegal, mattered little. The fire was lit and after burning for two days ran amok and burnt several hundred hectares of alpine vegetation and several patches of rainforest.

Legal action against ANM was considered but could not proceed because the TWS had no direct financial interest in the area.

The loss of Lake Rhona has, however, been of no value. ANM remains as arrogant as ever in its approach to National Parks and



its use of fire, and the Government refused to take any action against a company which openly flouted the law.

BB

• **New Canoeing Award Honours Tasmanian Explorer.** Olegas Truchanas, a Lithuanian-born Tasmanian, lost his life in the Gordon River Gorge, in the heart of Tasmania's South-west on 6 January 1972. He was a bushman extraordinary; his epic lone journeys on foot and by kayak had taken him to remote places probably never previously visited by a white man.

As a tribute to Olegas' work in exploration,

conservation and the education of others, the Touring Committee of the Australian Canoe Federation has introduced an award for achievement in Canoe Touring — to be named The Olegas Truchanas Canoe Touring Award. The award will be presented annually for the best log submitted to the Committee of a canoe tour undertaken anywhere in Australia.

Information brochures with details of the award have been distributed to the press, education authorities, government information centres, canoe clubs and associations and sporting bodies as well as the International Canoe Federation.

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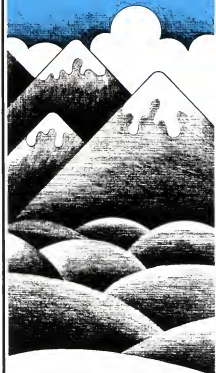
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● **Croak, Croak.** Following the report in the third issue of *Wild* on possible logging of rainforest in the Cannondale Ranges in the Melany area of Queensland, it is reported that the Queensland Forestry Department is conducting a three-year Fauna Survey to assess the effects of logging on the rare marsupial frog.

The irony is that logging is proceeding in the general area while the survey is taking place. Although the 'control area' of the study is not being logged now, the Department has not committed itself regarding what is to be done to the 'control area' when the study is completed.

The question that therefore arises is whether the study will help the frog or simply postpone its extinction for another three years.

Dave Moss

● **Fire.** Bushfires last summer burnt out a large part of New South Wales' central Blue Mountains. The main fire, within the Blue Mountains National Park, burnt out much of the Grose Valley. The first fire was thought to be started by sparks from a coal train and picnickers near Mt Victoria. It spread, very quickly, down the Grose Valley towards Faulconbridge, but was largely confined to the Grose Gorge.

To reduce the threat to houses, the fire authorities decided to conduct a large back-burn. This back-burn itself burnt out a massive area, posed a serious threat to houses and was only stopped by a change of wind direction.

Blue Gum Forest, in the Grose Valley, luckily seems to have escaped the worst of the fire.

Dave Noble

● **Search and Rescue.** 1982 proved to be a busy year for rescue groups in New South Wales. During the last half of the year some of the more notable rescues included:

A search for three schoolgirls lost near Jenolan Caves. They were not very experienced but well equipped, which was just as well as the weather was very bad with strong winds and snow. The girls were found fairly early by police. A large group of bushwalkers and police took part in the search as the weather did not permit the use of a helicopter.

A member of the Sydney Bushwalkers became separated from his party in the Colo area. He was quickly found by bushwalkers and a police helicopter. Many bushwalkers present expressed amazement at the circumstances in which this walker had become lost. The rest of the party apparently did not wait for one member to reach the fire track. When they had walked to their car, they drove off, still not waiting for him to turn up. It was only later that they realized he was lost, not just slow in getting back.

Edward Griffin of Sydney was recently rescued for the third time by helicopter. This time he was found lying on the ground near the Cox's River by off-duty police officers on a horse-riding trip. Mr Griffin, who is an epileptic, was without food or medicine for three days. He is well known to many bushwalkers in Sydney.

DN

● **No Ducks.** New South Wales and Victoria did not have a duck shooting season this year and South Australia could follow suit. It is the first time since 1967, when the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service

was established, that an open season for duck and quail shooting was not held.

The reasons are simple. For the last 24 to 48 months a great part of Australia has experienced drought. New South Wales and Victoria have been the two worst affected States, although parts of Queensland, South Australia and Northern Territory have also experienced severe rainfall deficiencies. This has resulted in very poor breeding of waterfowl over the past few years. Any reduction in the numbers of these adult birds will seriously affect the recovery of populations when the drought breaks.

The current drought has also dried up most of the waterfowl wetlands in New South Wales. There will be even fewer at the end of summer if rain does not fall in the meantime. This will mean that the many waterbirds congregating on the remaining wetlands will be very vulnerable to shooters.

Greg Siepen

● **No Parking.** Mr Eric Bedford, New South Wales Minister for Planning and the Environment, has stood firm in refusing to open up Kosciuszko National Park for summer grazing, despite considerable pressure from graziers. The graziers claim that the current drought is 'unique', that 'graziers are people too' and thus entitled to access to National Parks, and that grazing causes no proven adverse effects on alpine vegetation.

Conservationists reply that while the current drought is no doubt compounding problems, appropriate farm management strategies would have more beneficial long-term effects; that there is some doubt that cattle and sheep can be termed 'people'; and that long-term ecological studies show that cattle and sheep have quite significant adverse effects on alpine flora.

Jennie Whinam

● **Rainforest Logging Stopped.** The New South Wales Cabinet decided late last year to implement an immediate phasing out of rainforest logging. Cabinet's decision means the creation of new rainforest National Parks and extensions to a number of existing Parks. New South Wales Premier, Mr Wran, in announcing the decision, stated that the Government's action would not lead to the loss of any jobs. A \$1 million rainforest fund has been set up to promote and encourage the development of technology using alternative non-rainforest timbers.

Expansion of the National Parks and Wildlife Service estate as a result of the decision includes:

Border Ranges — Wiangarie, Roseberry and part of Mt Lindsey State Forests will be placed in the Border Ranges National Park. Grady's Creek Flora Reserve will be included in the Park without logging.

Nightcap Range — Goonimbar State Forest and part of the Whian Whian State Forest, including the controversial Terania Creek area, will form a new Nightcap National Park.

Washpool — The entire Washpool area, excluding the Desert Creek and Redbank areas, will form a Washpool National Park.

Black Scrub — The area of Bellinger State Forest known as Black Scrub will be included in the New England National Park.

Hastings — The Forbes River catchment will be included in the Werrikimbe National Park. The Government will also investigate extensions to the Barrington Tops National Park.

Conservationists are elated with Cabinet's decision. Peter Prineas of the National Parks Association described it as 'the most significant

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cant conservation decision of the Wran Government'.

It is hoped that the Queensland and Tasmanian Governments will see fit to follow suit and ensure the preservation of their rain-forest areas by incorporating them in National Parks.

Roger Lembit

• **Dam Breakers.** The Canberra Branch of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society organized the biggest environmental rally yet held in Canberra on 14 December outside Parliament House, when an estimated 2,000 people attended a rally calling for Federal intervention on the Franklin dam issue.

The meeting was addressed by Senators Chipp, West and Missen, poet Judith Wright and Professor John Mulvaney. Senator Missen gave support to the South-west blockade by saying 'that there were some laws that had to be broken'.

JW

• **High on Bikes.** There are not many countries in the world in which one can cycle from the steps of Parliament House to the summit of the highest mountain in one day. Australia is one of the few, the feat being recently attempted on 17 December 1982 by four young Canberra students: Sandy Lolicato, James Eldridge, Roger Nicol and Lee Bygrave. The ride involved a distance of 250 kilometres and an overall climb of about 1,500 metres. Actual cycling time (not including rests) to complete the distance was a little over ten hours.

The main purpose of the ride was to raise money for the Tasmanian Wilderness Society and the 'No Dams' campaign being staged to save the Franklin and Gordon Rivers. In this respect the cyclists were successful, raising over \$1,200 through sponsorship.

The ride received extensive local media coverage and helped to make the people of Canberra, Cooma and Jindabyne more aware of the importance of the Tasmanian wilderness.

• **Undermining a National Park.** Developers have proposed a project in New South Wales' Snowy Mountains to construct a 4.4 kilometre rail link, 3.2 kilometres of it underground, to join the existing ski resort at Perisher Valley with the proposed one, Crackenback Village, which is to be on the Alpine Way between Thredbo and Jindabyne. The railway may also be extended north of Perisher to link with the proposed Blue Cow downhill skiing area. The proposals are being considered by the New South Wales Government.

• **Hard Driven.** Last November the unlikely Australian wilderness duo of Captain Mark Phillips and former Formula 1 world motor racing champion Alan Jones came together to promote a brand of four-wheel-drive vehicles by 'scrambling' them through the country surrounding Wonnangatta Station in Victoria's mountainous north-east. They were transported to and from this wilderness adventure by helicopter, and were preceded by a 'survey party' which reportedly chain-sawed 270 fallen trees from one short track.

• **Buffalo Camp.** Camping space at Victoria's Mt Buffalo has been strictly limited for a number of years, but the National Park Rangers have made things increasingly difficult and restrictive for the annual summer influx of rockclimbers. They come from all over Australia and, in recent years, have

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been confined to the ridiculously overcrowded site allocated, for a fee, to the Victorian Climbing Club. Now, it is reported, the Rangers are considering limiting camping stays to a short period of, say, a week. This would represent a further, even more odious, restriction on climbing in Australia's premier granite climbing area.

• **Vegetation Map.** The Victoria Conservation Trust, in conjunction with the Soil Conservation Authority, has published the first in a series of colour vegetation maps of the Bogong High Plains. The map, entitled *Rocky Valley*, covers the area around Falls Creek alpine village and includes Mt Cope and Mt Nelse. The map includes road and track information as well as showing the location of major plant communities.

On the back of the map are colour photos by Colin Totterdell of plant communities and individual species. The photos will assist in identifying some of the common wildflowers which grow on the Bogong High Plains.

The map is the culmination of three years' study of the vegetation by the staff of the Soil Conservation Authority. Conservation of the vegetation is the main aim of soil conservation in these alpine catchments.

The remainder of the series of five maps covering the Bogong High Plains will be released over the next two years.

• **Dredging the Bottom.** A quiet weekend's fishing isn't likely to be as therapeutic as it once used to be. A relatively new form of gold mining is rapidly realizing its nuisance value. Powered by a small, unsilenced motor, it is essentially an underwater vacuum cleaner; the river bottom is sucked up and through a sluicing apparatus.

Sounds like harmless fun, but the vehicle-reliant operators are beginning to turn out in numbers. They all but line parts of the Goulburn River and are permitted to practise their trade in six other Victorian river systems. Apart from creating an appalling noise similar to that of a chain saw, from dawn to dusk, their activities arguably contribute to a river's flood proneness as a result of the removal of large stones and the breaking up of ore-laden banks. The pump kills fish eggs and the increased silt levels in the water are detrimental to aquatic life. The great attraction is that Victoria's 40-odd full-time, and several hundred hobbyist, gold dredgers may not effectively be liable for revenue payments or income tax. The State Government has anticipated conservation uproar and is seeking to tighten regulations. However, without field officers to enforce the already ineffective regulations, Marlboro-smoking champions of Eureka's ethic of free enterprise seem, in fact, to be quite free to operate over-sized dredges and not to bother about noise or damage.

• **The Snowy River Next?** It is rumoured that the Victorian National Parks Service has been considering the 'opening up' of the Snowy River Valley for use by tourists in cars. This monstrous possibility reportedly might entail the development of roads to access points at places such as the Little River junction and at Jacksons Crossing (where the existing road would presumably be upgraded and 'facilities', such as lavatories, added).

• **All the Way.** Last December Paul Caffyn completed his kayak circumnavigation of Australia at Queenscliff, near Melbourne. This completes what must surely be one of

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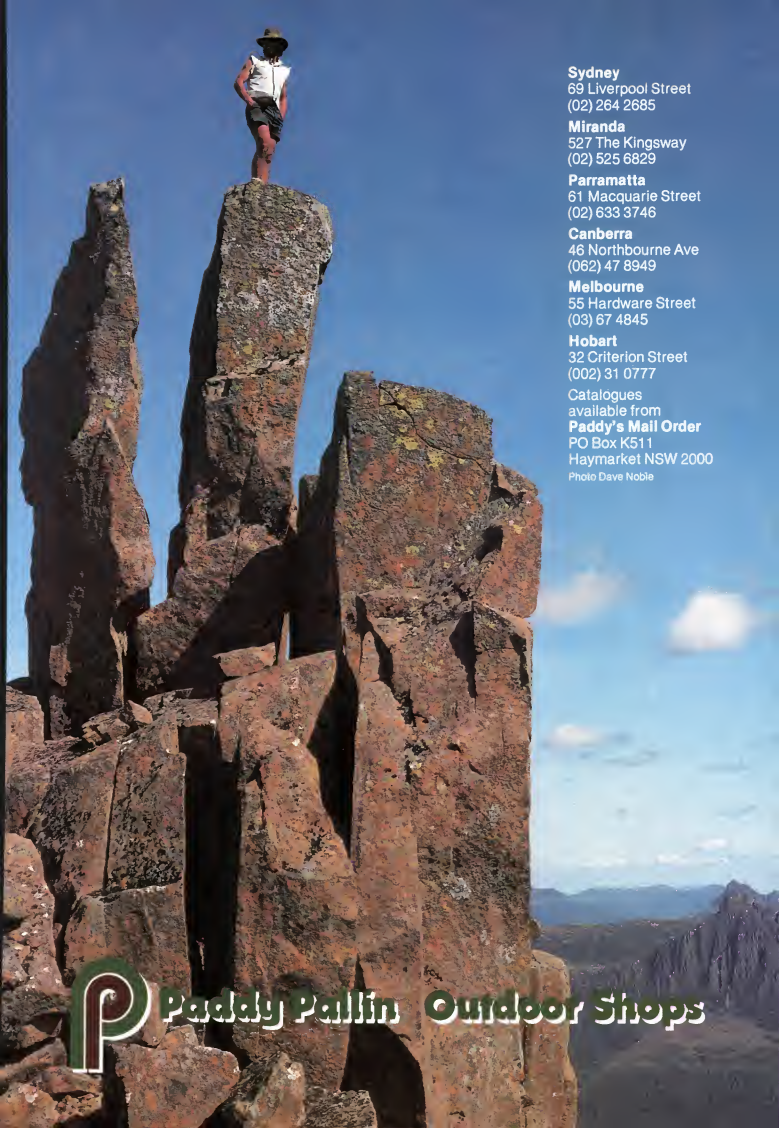


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• **Paddled.** The South Australian Canoeing Association Inc announced its acceptance of the resignation of Joe Lamb '... after SACA Officers and others were attacked in acrimonious letters, some published in international journals ...' Mr Lamb has reportedly also resigned from Bon Voyageurs Canoe Club which is to change its name.

• **Western Rogaining.** The first international rogaine in Australia was held near Perth last September. There were 260 entrants in the event. Victorian teams dominated the placings. John Berwick, Graham Foley and Craig Olsen became the new Australian champions.

• **Canoeing Titles.** The Australian canoeing titles were held on the Harvey River south of Perth in January. We hope to be able to report details in a later issue.



John Blennerhassett completing the first turn off the summit of Mt Cook. Below left is Mt Tasman, New Zealand's second highest peak. Geoff Wayatt

• **Skiling Mt Cook.** New Zealand mountaineering instructors Geoff Wayatt and John Blennerhassett last November made the first ski descent of New Zealand's highest peak. This formidable achievement involved negotiating green sstrugli ice, 60° slopes, the difficult summit rocks and the gaping crevasses of the avalanche-prone Linda Glacier.

Half a dozen or so pitches were done roped, mainly on the green summit ice, but they only removed their skis once, briefly, below the Grand Plateau.

The descent to the Tasman Glacier (3,000 metres) is the longest ski descent in the Southern hemisphere.

• **New Zealand Conservation.** New Zealand received high praise for its conservation policies at a recent council meeting of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources held in Switzerland.

The chairman of the organization's Commission on National Parks (Dr Kentin Miller) spoke of the example set by 'the pioneering work in New Zealand which shows the most advanced approach in the world towards

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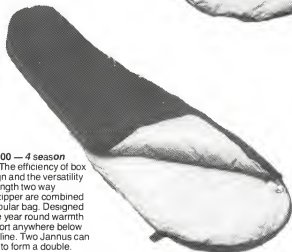
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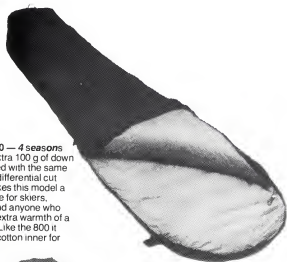
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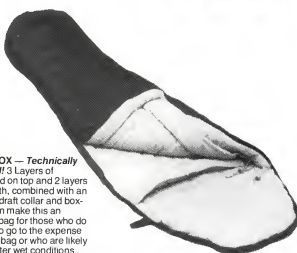
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JANNU 900	Slant Wall	900 g	550 loft down	Full	1.85 kg	— 15°	4 season/ snow
SUPER FOX	5 Layer	180g/m ² /layer	Polarguard	Side	2.20 kg	— 5°	3 to 4 season
EXPED. ONE	7 Layer	180g/m ² /layer	Polarguard	Side	2.85 kg	— 15°	4 season/ snow

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establishing a representative system of protected areas at the national level.

The organization's National System on Environmental Planning said at the meeting that it had commended to other countries the application of the World Conservation Strategy as it was being implemented in New Zealand.

• **Coast to Coast.** The Macpac Wilderness Coast to Coast race was to be run across New Zealand's South Island, from Kumara to Sumner, over two days at the end of February. This famous race has been replanned to cut the cost to entrants and make it more 'physical'. The race now involves cycling, running and kayaking, and is limited to 100 amateur athletes who can enter as individuals or as two-person teams.

• **Annapurna III Revisited.** Another Australian expedition, again Sydney-based, is to attempt Annapurna III, scene in 1980 of Australia's worst mountaineering tragedy.

Whereas the 1980 attempt was on the north side, the new expedition is to attempt the peak by a route on the south-west face during the post-monsoon season this year. Two members of the original expedition, Steve McDowell and Jonathan Chester, are returning to Annapurna III, this time as expedition leaders.

• **Australasian Baffin Island Expedition 1982.** Our two-man expedition, of equal New Zealand (Robert Staveley Parker) and Australian (Warren Lee) representation, met by chance in Montreal and jetted off in armchair comfort to the untrampled wilds of the Arctic. Routes to be climbed during the high summer were: 1 the Swiss (original) route on Mt Asgard; 2 the west face (a 400 metre granite rib) of an unclimbed peak on the Nerotusq Glacier; 3 the unclimbed south face of Mt Loli.

A clean granite buttress dropped directly from Loli's summit to the Turner Glacier. A continuous crack up its backbone flashed 'please climb' in day-glow neon. Some 20 rope-stretching and direct pitches were belayed up the buttress (600 metres, grade 19). The only previous ascent of the mountain had been... in 1966, by the long, pinnaled west ridge, an unappealing descent route. We rappelled down the equally uninviting north ridge to traverse the mountain and return to a lonely tent on the Turner... a 26-hour day.

The mountains are like deserted and unspoiled Chamonix Alps.

Warren Lee

• **Heard Island.** The expedition reported in earlier issues of *Wild* is finally underway. It is now sailing to Heard Island with its formidable scientific team and other members of the party.

• **Climbing Articles Wanted.** Work is already under way on the 1984 issue of the successful annual climbing magazine *Rock*. Colour slides, black and white prints and articles for possible publication should be sent to Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415, Pahrnan, Victoria 3181 before 30 June 1983.

• **Corrections.** In our summer issue the photo caption on page 16 refers, of course, to the Franklin River, and the young lady pictured on page 20 is the charming Nina Wilkinson. The photo on page 68 was reversed! The area code for Angel Rain's phone number (page 95) should, of course, be 08.

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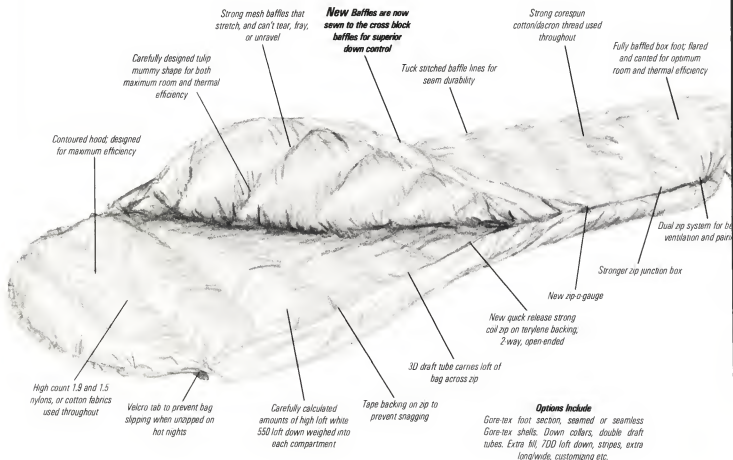
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Trekker	Tulip, box foot	5 cm box wall	185 + 75	550	1,300	13	-3
Convertible	Rectangular	7 cm box wall	185 + 110	700	1,500	15	-5
Backpacker	Tulip, box foot	7 cm box wall	185 + 75	700	1,400	16	-7
Ski Tourer	Mummy, Gore-Tex box foot	8 cm box wall	185	800	1,550	17	-12
Mountaineer	Roomy mummy, box foot	15 cm slant wall	185	1,000	1,800	20	-20
Coupling	Mummy double bag	5 cm box wall	2 x 185	1,100	2,100	14	-5

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Bifida	Rectangular	7 cm box wall	185 + 110	700	1,250	16	-7
Adela	Mummy, G'tx box foot	8 cm box wall	185	800	1,300	18	-15
Egger	Mummy, box foot	15 cm slant wall	185	1,000	1,700	22	-20
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Getting Started

Making a Start in Climbing, with Glenn Tempest

● SINCE *WILD* CAME INTO BEING almost two years ago, rockclimbing and alpine climbing have become a small but significant part of its varied content. Obviously a great number of readers are bushwalkers, and, as such, many will prefer to keep both feet firmly on the ground. Others already mix their walking with the occasional climbing trip, whilst some would like to get out and try it for the first time.

Rockclimbing and alpine climbing are quite different yet closely related activities, the distinction of which is often misunderstood by the general, non-climbing, public. It is still wrongly believed by many that Mt Everest is every climber's ultimate goal! The diversity of rockclimbing alone is vast: its venues include the boulder-strewn beaches of a lonely coastline, old quarries in the city, spectacular pinnacles in the desert and sheer granite walls thousands of metres high. Because climbing is a very individual and diverse activity, it has no real rules as such, and organized competitions are generally discouraged. It is this relaxed freedom that forms an essential part of climbing's popularity.

Another misconception is that one must be both young and very fit to go climbing. Not so! Rockclimbing and alpine climbing should appeal to males and females of all ages. Recently a major mountain in China, Muztagh Ata (7,546 metres), was climbed by Norman Croucher. This already impressive achievement is all the more significant considering that Norman lost both his legs in a railway accident years previously. His long list of rock and alpine climbs around the world has been accomplished with artificial legs.

Another example that comes to mind is that of an elderly woman who, just into her eighties, made an ascent of the famous Matterhorn. And this is not an isolated case. I had the pleasure of meeting an elderly man on an impressive limestone peak in the heart of the spectacular Dolomite mountains in Italy. Whilst we sat on a narrow ledge some 300 metres above the ground, he proudly informed me that he'd taken part in the first ascent of that route in 1935. I was certainly impressed, as the climb was quite difficult yet he showed little sign of finding it beyond him after so many years.

Rockclimbing. Australia, despite being the flattest continent in the world, has a surprising number of excellent rockclimbing areas. With fine weather and much good rock, we are lucky to have a climbing situation that few countries can equal. Most of the major capital cities have their own climbing clubs that welcome anyone who wishes to gain further information. Some of these clubs, such as the Victorian Climbing Club, the Australian National University Mountaineering Club in Canberra and the Climbers Club of South Australia, have introductory beginners' meets at a very modest cost.

On a somewhat more expensive level, although also very popular, are the many commercial operators' courses available. For information and addresses of these courses and beginners' meets, check the Club News and Adventure Travel Directory sections of



Getting started early! Graham Jones (aged 11) on Spiral Architect, grade 19, Bissetts Pinnacles, Victoria. Tempest

Wild. It is also worth noting that the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club handbook, *Equipment for Bushwalking and Mountaineering*, contains a comprehensive list of active climbing clubs across the country. As well as stocking this book, the better specialist climbing shops will also have information on local rockclimbing courses and clubs.

When undertaking a course there is little need to obtain any special equipment. An old pair of sand-shoes or gym boots will be all that is needed for your footwear, whilst a sil-harness and helmet are usually provided.

Alpine climbing. Mountaineering, unlike its near cousin rockclimbing, has an element of risk that cannot always be avoided as much as one might like. It is important to obtain some sort of grounding in basic snowcraft, survival and climbing technique. Combine this with a healthy respect for the mountains and a whole new world will be open to you.

Naturally Australia has little to offer the serious alpinist, but it does have a number of excellent winter training areas that are perfectly suited to novice climbers accompanied by experienced mountaineers. Of the better known areas, Blue Lake and Watsons Crags in New South Wales, Cradle Mountain in Tasmania and Mts Feathertop and Bogong in Victoria are the best. Once again, numerous courses are available that



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specialize in winter trips into these and other regions.

New Zealand continues to be the major attraction for Australian mountaineers. Each summer hundreds of climbers cross the Tasman to climb in one of the world's most spectacular mountain areas. Here the novice will find a number of excellent courses and guiding services. Information and addresses of these courses can be obtained from the Adventure Travel Directory in *Wild* or from the better outdoor shops.

Any of these courses will provide a list of requirements which, unlike basic rockclimbing, can be quite extensive. Much of the standard alpine gear can be hired, but it is often a good idea to purchase some of the more important items such as climbing boots, pack and warm clothing. Another way to offset costs is to check the availability of used equipment. This can be done by studying the notice board at specialist outdoor shops or local climbing newsletters.

Hopefully this brief introduction to rockclimbing and alpine climbing will be of interest to those that feel there is more to the world than the horizontal. ●

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Around Flinders

Earle Bloomfield tells how, in sea kayaking, things don't



Island
t always go as planned.

● ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE islands litter the eastern shelf of Bass Strait, scattered, confused and undisciplined, tossed off Tasmania's north-east shoulder in a fit of pique, to be battered to bits by countless millennia of violent storms and finally reabsorbed into the sands of infinity. Modern day sailors, perhaps keen to relive the ancient seafarers' nightmare of sailing off the edge of the world, would do well to stow their sea chests securely and make for Bass Strait and her treacherous islands.

The rounded polished pates of the mountains and reefs of these islands remind one of their great age and the need for some respect. Many early explorers were driven here in search of a safe anchorage but found instead the final mooring, when the bellies were ripped from their frail wooden ships. Over 200 ships have gone to the bottom of Bass Strait, at least 70 of them along the shores of the Furneaux Group of islands, where our plane now bumped and skidded to a halt.

We had arrived at Whitemark on Flinders Island, the Canberra of the Furneaux Group and the wind capital of the world. Over the next two weeks we were to be blown down, up, sideways and under, at all hours of the day and night and from every direction.

one and only grog hole, the Interstate Hotel, but on the other hand it could have been the natural ebullience that comes with suddenly being *there*.

Nursing the sort of headaches you could only pick up at lunch time, we retired to the quiet cypress-groved farm shed of local shipping agent Jeff Walker. The kayaks, food and equipment had been shipped from Port Welshpool a week before in the care of Mr Tremont.

Through the lazy afternoon we water-proofed leaky bulkheads, replaced damaged hatches and sorted through the complete catalogue of outdoor equipment. Climbing ropes, harnesses, runners, Jumars — what sort of expedition is this? Roman-style canoeing? Roman centurions used to go straight over an obstacle rather than round it.

Steve is responsible for all this. 'She'll be right' he said jovially over the phone, 'Don't worry about it'. I'm not worried, but right now I can see a couple of other people who are. This is going to be a hilarious Heath Robinson affair, the whole lot held together with the mirrors and string of wait-and-see tactics.

By late afternoon, with everything sorted, people's little caches of secret, special, mine-only food hidden carefully in their kayaks, and all the climbing gear dumped in Walker's shed, we trucked ourselves to the Whitemark beach and



We were a typically rat-eared bunch of sea canoeists. Perhaps it was the horror of the previous night's bivvy at Port Welshpool amid mosquitoes, mad dogs and a cacophony of engines which sent us bounding headlong for Whitemark's

set up camp, ready to leave on tomorrow's high tide. By midday we had dragged the kayaks, almost crumpled with the weight of their unreasonable loads, screeching over the coarse granite sand and into the sea at last.

Did I say 200 vessels down there? It's only luck that the tally is not 205 by now. It was a gruelling ride round the western seawall of Trousers Point, especially on the first day afloat.

Snuggling in to the secluded camp-

Earle Bloomfield (left), Peter Newman and Andrew Rust at Fotheringgate Beach, Flinders Island, and above, Bloomfield in a six metre Nordkapp sea kayak leaping over a seven metre wave off Port Arthur on the west coast of Flinders Island. Steve Tremont

[illegible]

The wind had gone and found someone else to annoy so we awoke to a quiet new world, and after breakfast we set off again. Rusty and Mr Tremont climbed Mt Strzelecki, at 756 metres the island's highest point, while Steve, Peter and I meandered along the coast toward Franklin Sound which separates Cape

The wind was ripping up the sea now and I worried for our two climbers who would be out in all this. At least they had a following sea. Then, towards dusk,

Our third day out and it was still blowing. This time there was rain to add misery to discomfort. There was no way we'd get round the whole island now. Leaky boats, morning-after muscles and wet gear. Always wet gear. I wanted some sunshine. Sixteen kilometres later, with the wind still hard at our heels, we thrashed and cursed our way across a wind tunnel into the pretty fishing village of Ladv Barron.

I was finally out of the wind, just soaking up the warm morning sun. It was a

A typically rat-eared bunch of sea canoeists.

they glided into our millpond cove, elated with their furious ride. I raced out

Top, remains of the jetty where the ill-fated Tasmanian aborigines landed at 'extinction camp', above, heavy seas off Port Davey, Flinders Island, and right, Steve Weston pauses for a 'brew' below the cloud-covered Strzelecki Ranges on Flinders Island. Photos Bloomfield, top and right, Tremont



day of rest and I was lying half asleep with my back against my kayak, vaguely listening to Peter and Rusty's plan to meet Laurie Ford on Clarke Island for a joint trip across Banks Strait to Tasmania. I could feel the eerie sensation of an unseen sweat: like being aimed at by a long-range sniper, voodooed from afar. My eyes flickered open, and in that instant I saw it, a great fat tiger

The kayaks almost crumpled with the weight of their loads.

snake, its eyes a metre from mine, with head and neck flattened out, as if to strike. But Timothy Tiger Snake shot through without even so much as a kiss

good-bye.

Peter and Rusty paddled out past Gun Carriage Island and the wreck of the Farsund, now high and dry on Punccheon Shoals, toward their southern adventure, while we caught a truck going north through the interior to Settlement Point, hoping for a few days' sun soaking on the west coast.

There were more days of wind when Steve and I explored the pitiful remains of the Tasmanian aborigines' last camp before their extinction. Here was their chapel, now fully restored after use as a woolshed. Four white-washed brick walls with only emptiness between, a physical manifestation of the gulf between the cultures of the city and the bush. A few metres away a flattened windrow of rubble is all that remains of an extensive street of white terraced houses where the aborigines lived. Soon there will be no trace of them at all, and I began to understand that resilience in history is simply a matter of keeping

your walls standing.

After a storm which provided some fairly exacting canoeing conditions, and a superb sunny day spent mostly underwater spear-fishing and photographing, we folded our battered tents and paddled south through typically rough and wind-scoured seas over the last 24 kilometres to Whitemark.

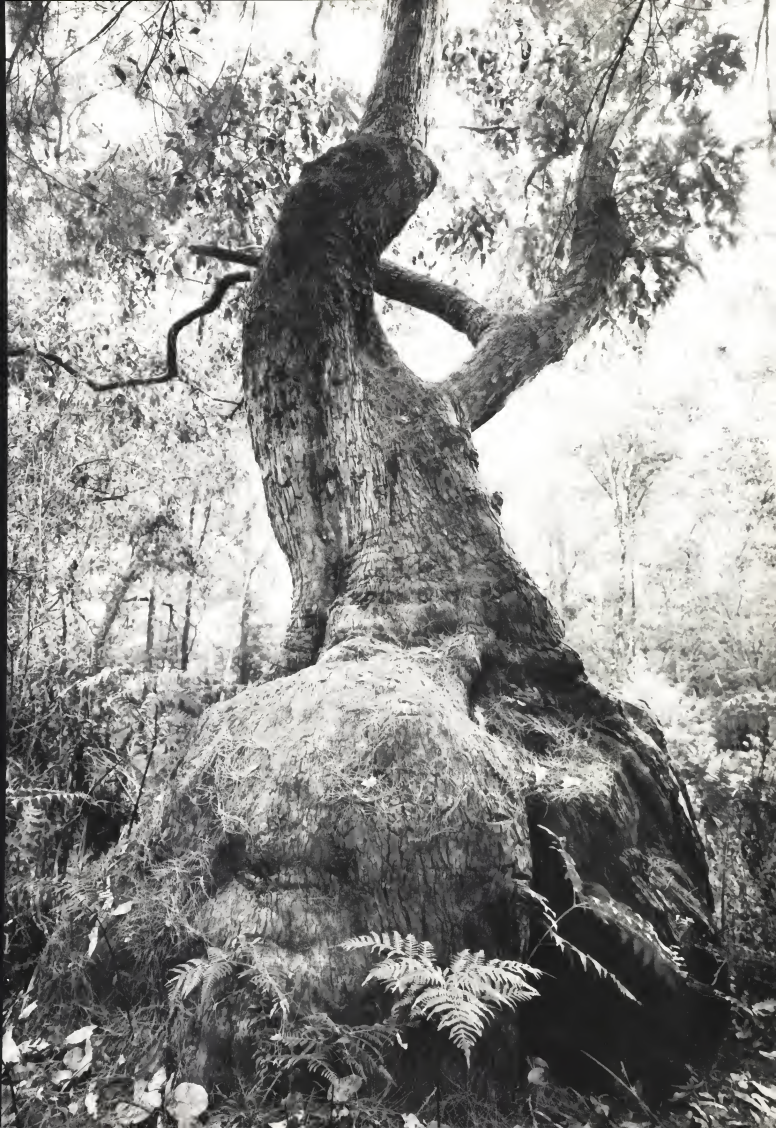
Peter and Rusty found Laurie and they made a quick and uneventful crossing to Tasmania, while Steve and Mr Tremont sailed northward to Victoria with all our gear in a schooner. I waved them farewell at Whitemark with my sign-writing gear in one hand and five cents in the other. Just about everyone on Flinders Island wanted a sign done, so I stayed.

Here on the Cape Paterson beach I felt the breeze tugging insistently at my sleeve and I knew that finally my wandering spirit has been seduced and that I must return, again and again, to the 'Isles of the Wind'. ●



Peter Ewing

*Blatchford Escarpment, eastern Kimberleys, and
opposite, tingle tree, Walpole-Nornalup National Park.
All photos are taken in West Australia.*







Left, limestone formations, Nambung National Park, top, beach stones south of Peaceful Bay, Walpole-Nornalup National Park, and above, paper bark, lower Chamberlain River gorge, Kimberleys.





The Main Range in Winter

Ski touring on the
roof of Australia
(almost!); with
Brian Walters.

● I STAND AT CHARLOTTE'S PASS, looking west. The sun is shining. I can see the depression in which I know Blue Lake, my goal, is hidden.

I ease the weighty pack on my shoulders and start traversing down through deep snow. I am alone, having made my way by car, oversnow transport and T-bar lift to the pass itself. It is now after 2.30 pm and not much daylight remains.

I take off my skis for the final section

The view north from Mt Kosciuszko. Bill Bachman

of the descent to the Snowy River. After crossing, I clip them on again for the steep slide up the far bank and strike out for Blue Lake.

The sun is low and in my eyes as I ski west. It is getting cold, and the snow which has melted during the day has frozen to ice, making skiing difficult. Sunlight glinting from the ice casts halos round the silhouetted rocks — an eerie and beautiful effect.

I ski on, across the snow bowl of Blue Lake (only three months earlier I had rested here in the sun and drunk its waters) and join the rest of the party who have already set up camp. It is not

... an explosion
of snow as he
hits, then stillness.

long before darkness, and the silent spindrift, settle down on us. We have arrived, and a week of wintry possibilities wait to be discovered.

One of the aims of the trip is to try some ice climbing at Blue Lake. This is a new experience for me, and my first impression is how cold one can get doing it. There is not the steady activity of ski touring, and the cold seems to seep through clothing at every contact with the ice. My second impression is just how easy it is for crampons to shred waterproof overpants when a foothold gives way. But most of all I will remember overcoming the surge of fear that convulses my stomach as I trust myself to ice axe and crampons. A grip on ice seems tenuous at best, and the ice a shifting, untrustworthy medium that separates me from the firm rock beneath.

We dig a snow cave. A tunnel leads to a large chamber which sleeps two in comfort. We thrust a stock through the roof to make an air hole, and carve a niche in the wall for our candle.

The heat of our bodies softens the walls enough to round any rough edges, and the current of air through the vent creates a scalloped effect on the walls like wave ripples on a sandy sea floor. The ceiling is shaped so that nothing drips on us, and as the night grows cold the walls freeze hard.

We sleep warmly in the muffled silence of our cave. Snow absorbs sound; someone can shout along the two metre entrance tunnel without being heard within. We know it is morning when we find ourselves surrounded by a translucent blue light that filters through the walls.

Being so close to Kosciusko, we are fascinated by the peak. Our trip would be incomplete if we did not climb it.

We take overnight gear and ski south, avoiding the narrow and precipitous range from Carruthers Peak because visibility is poor and snow falling heavily.

Andrew misjudges a slope on Mt Clarke and swoops down over an edge, disappearing from view as the grade steepens dramatically. It is some time before he re-emerges, dwarfed by distance but rocketing towards the Snowy River, clearly with no prospect of stopping. He is out of control, his body tensed for impact. There is a hesitation ... skis cross in mid air ... an explosion of snow as he hits, then stillness.

Andrew is lying some 30 metres from his skis. When we eventually reach him, we find he has made an enormous crater when he baled out. He has a sprained ankle but is able to ski with us.

We reach Seamans Hut, the highest building in Australia, where the pounding weather rules out any attempt on Kosciusko, so tantalizingly close. Disappointment is extreme, but future expeditions are planned as we talk for hours in this wind-blown hut. The distance we have come seems to give perspective to our working lives.

Back to Blue Lake. We skim along slopes near the river, ski tips bursting through sparkling powder; up over the icy slopes of Mt Clarke, skis clattering on the slippery surface, metal edges providing the only bite. I marvel at the sheer volume of snow piled up for mile after mile over these ranges.

The avalanche: one minute Craig is inching along a steep snowy slope, and then with a low rumble he is surfing, tumbling, unhurt, as tons of snow roll and flow downwards. I am almost frantic with alarm. Craig laughs.

It is our final day. We wake at 6.30 am to find 30 centimetres of snow have fallen overnight. We have to climb up out of the tent on to the snow surface. Outside, a driving wind is carrying yet more snow. Packing is unpleasant. It takes some time to clear our ski bindings of ice. Then we're off, skiing straight over the surface of Blue Lake, through the swirling whiteness broken only by occasional craggy rocks and by my companion ahead of me.

We reach the snow-covered outlet of the lake and ski on to Hedley Tarn. By now the effort of skiing has begun to warm us and fingers and toes are no longer numb. Our route lies down a broad ridge to the Snowy valley. Furious winds have blasted the top of this ridge clear of snow cover, in many places leaving only ice, treacherous for skiing. We both take many falls, and getting up with heavy packs is hard work. We gain the lower reaches of the ridge and the snow is deeper, the skiing pleasant, as we schuss down to the Snowy River, where we rest in the quiet shelter of the valley and cross by a snow bridge.

Then the long haul up the other side, herringboning. It is exhausting, but the wind seems friendly because it is behind us. I climb 50 paces, then rest, then another 50 paces. At the top the murderous ice again.

There are beautiful runs down the far side, arrowing across the slope to the snow-covered road, and then we are striding out for Perisher Valley ski resort and transport.

There is a hold-up of four hours before Mike skis in, looking tired and worried. He has spent time searching for a skier who lost his way. By now it is cloudy and cold at Perisher and conditions are deteriorating, but as we drive down the range the snow cover decreases and we emerge into a clear sunny day.

A change of vehicles at Sawpit Creek and I am making for my Bairnsdale home, alone in my car. I think of the past week skiing and ice climbing, when my existence has been pared to an elemental simplicity. I think of the lack of challenge in our materialistic way of life and am saddened, wondering restlessly where this challenge may be found and yet fearing it.

I drive on in the gathering gloom. Then I am driving beside the Snowy River, so different from where I had crossed it in the morning. I stop at the Victorian border and am moved by the towering wooded hills and the wide sandy beaches, the river winding its way through in the quiet of dusk. I have a sudden impulse to spend the night here, to sleep on that sand, to rise to drink the waters of the Snowy. But I drive on. I will always regret that decision.

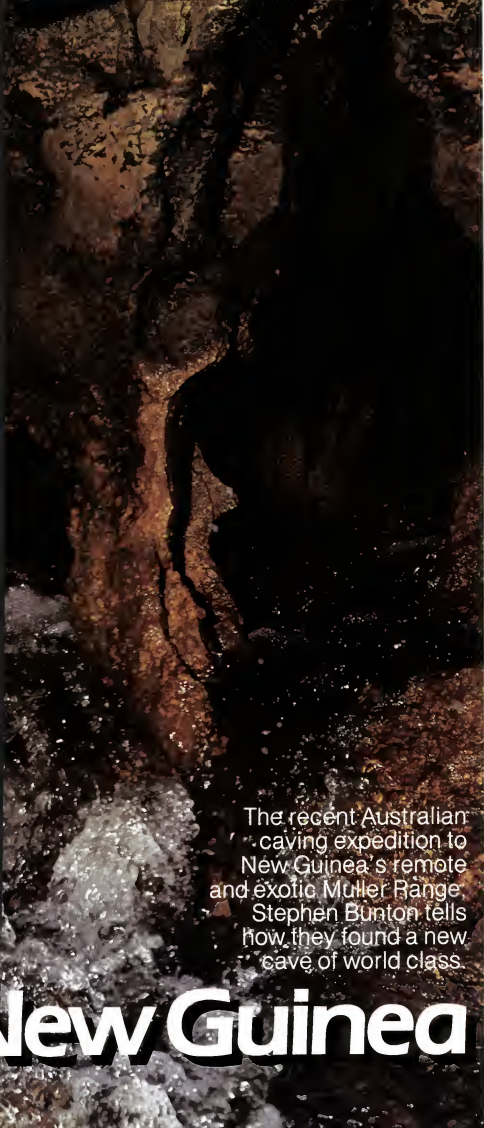
This is a lonely road. I see no cars between Ingebyra and Wulgulmerang — two hours' driving. After climbing out of the Snowy valley the road wends its way down to the Suggan Buggan River. On the small wooden bridge (without railings) I stop the engine and switch off the lights. The river chuckles across its stony bed and I can hear singing in the trees.

Top, skiers dwarfed by Mt Kosciusko's east face, and right, the long climb from the camp at frozen Blue Lake. Inset, 'a grip on ice seems tenuous at best'. Photos Bachman, Michael Collier, and inset, Ian Armstrong





To the Bottom of N



The recent Australian
caving expedition to
New Guinea's remote
and exotic Muller Range,
Stephen Bunton tells
how they found a new
cave of world class.

New Guinea

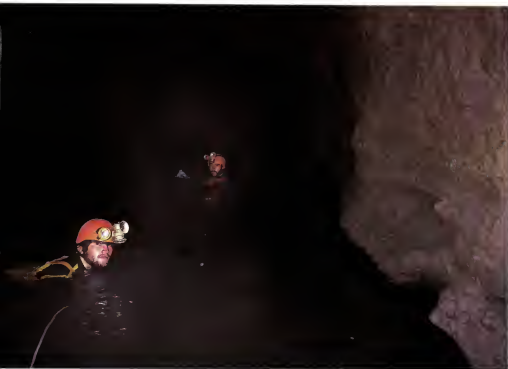


● THIS WAS THE FOURTH EXPEDITION TO the Muller Range in Papua New Guinea's Southern Highlands. For nine years a dedicated group of Australian speleologists — cave explorers — has organized trips to this remote and uninhabited corner of New Guinea. Their quest was the world's deepest cave.

These expeditions were led by Dr Julia James of Sydney University's Chemistry School. Julia has caved in many parts of the world during the last 15 years. She was quick to perceive the great potential of Single Rope Techniques, and armed with this new technology chose New Guinea as the most likely place to discover good vertical cave systems.

New Guinea is still one of the great unknowns. Warm tropical waters have, over many millions of years, supported the growth of great coral reefs. These reefs have gradually changed into limestone, and as Australia drifted imperceptibly north on a collision course with Asia, the great mountain chains of the New Guinea Highlands were formed. The island is still tropical, and luxuriant rainforest covers those areas not in the path of man's slash-and-burn agriculture. It rains almost every day. The water percolates through the thin acid soil, picking up carbon dioxide and becoming acidic itself. Acidic water is needed to dissolve limestone, and tiny trickles join to form streams and eventually mighty rivers that plunge underground into the deep dark unknown. Here the rate of solution of limestone is the highest in the world. Caves form big and fast, and the stone-age people who have inhabited this region for thousands of years were always totally unaware of them. All they knew was that out there in the traditional hunting grounds were large

"The nearest thing to body surfing underground", Mark Laurendet in Outflow Cave, Atea region, and above, mudman from Asaro. Photos Dirk Stoffels and Stephen Bunton



Kanandas (stone houses) inhabited by Masali (evil spirits).

The native Duna tribesmen weren't completely ignorant of the white man when cavers arrived in the area. They had encountered missionaries, patrol officers and mining companies. It took two expeditions to convince them we weren't looking for gold.

In 1973 members of the New Guinea Speleological Research Expedition were the first people to come to the area with the simple objective of having fun and going caving. Life in the jungle wasn't that easy and the expedition was a gruelling affair, for some a total misery. One participant was asked by an envious friend — 'How did you come to go caving in New Guinea?', to which he replied 'Sheer bad luck!' These

pioneers, however, did lay the basis for future expeditions and satisfactorily tested their single rope techniques with the discovery of two 300 metre deep caves.

The 1976 Muller Expedition wasn't so lucky. It found remarkably little, despite walking almost the total length and breadth of the Muller Plateau. They endured many hardships because they chose a lightweight approach and neglected many of the comforts even expeditioners require. When they returned to Sydney with the news that they had found a new entrance into the Atea Kananda (Atea Cave), the hardships were forgotten and plans were made for the biggest and best caving expedition yet mounted to Papua New Guinea.

Atea 78 was billed as 'The Search for the World's Deepest Cave', and was screened on television as a documentary with that title. Atea Kananda is a fearsome river cave. The Atea River plunges into the entrance doline over a 60 metre waterfall with such incredible force that it creates a swirling cloud of spray which saturates a cave even before he goes underground. Exploration stopped in 1973 a short way inside the entrance when the huge river dropped over a series of rapids: the walls were too difficult to traverse. In 1976 two Sydney cavers crossed the 'boiling' plunge pool at the cave's entrance to discover another entrance, and the passages inside were explored to 4.2 kilometres. The river was relocated inside the cave in a passage called the Ship Canal. In this deep, wide river canyon the water flowed slowly and silently off into the darkness with a forceful current, a hidden danger to the unwary.

The members of the Atea 78 expedition were prepared to follow this huge river through the mountain and down to the lowlands where it emerged as the Nali River. The connection would give the expedition the record it was seeking, although such exploration was fraught with danger. To deal with a river of this magnitude, new techniques and equip-

New Guinea is still one of the great unknowns

ment had to be developed and practised. High-speed bolting techniques, combined with improved free climbing and aid climbing skills, would enable cavers to avoid the water in the most hazardous sections.

A team of 50 cavers spent two months on the Muller Range. They were somewhat disappointed, and somewhat relieved, when the cave didn't go deep. The horizontal bedding of the limestone in the area dictated that this was an area for long caves but not deep caves. At the end of the expedition Atea Kananda was 30.5 kilometres long and the longest cave in the Southern hemisphere.

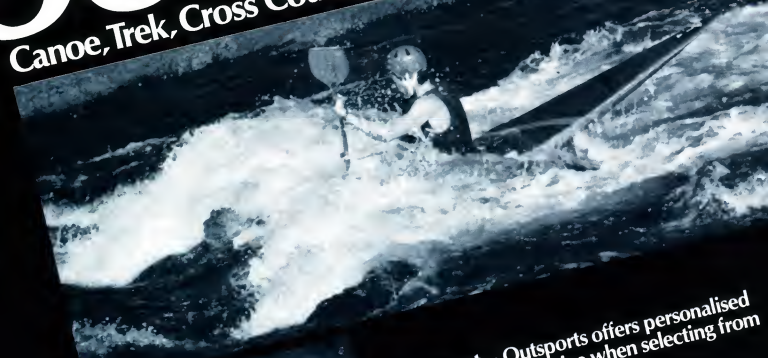
Australian cavers still hoped for the world's deepest cave and although the geology is against it, New Guinea still provides the best prospects for finding good new caves. Muller 82 was planned as a collection of small teams spread out across the Muller Range in order to increase the chances of finding such

To top left, Ian Westwood, left, and Stephen Burton in the Atea Ship Canal. Lower left, a caver beneath formations in Roli-A-Go-Go, and right, in a well decorated passage, the Sacking of Rome, in Mammo Kananda. Photos Stoffels, top left, and Burton

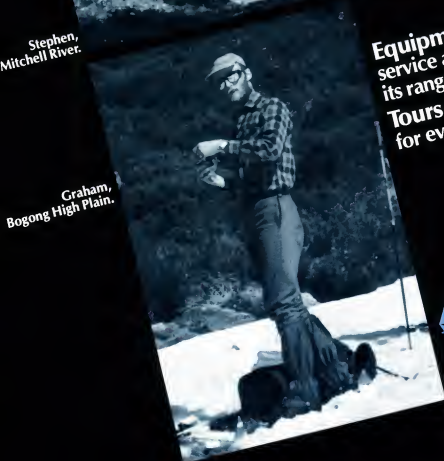


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caves. To service these widespread base camps we relied upon extensive use of helicopters. The job of the advance party was to walk into the area and construct the helpads. Most of the expedition members would fly in to avoid the exhaustive slog through jungle mud, bamboo thickets, raging river crossings and the countless slippery log bridges which lined the path over the 3,000 metre Muller Range.

For the advance party there was no avoiding these obstacles. After hiring twelve Duna tribesmen as local assistants and porters, they began the three-day walk-in. It was an adventure for these natives too, and an opportunity to visit new hunting grounds. During the first week they managed to catch a profusion of native marsupials and we were invited to share such delicacies as tree kangaroo, cuscus and white-tailed rat. These were wrapped in leaves and cooked in an oven of hot stones called a 'mumbar'.

Clearing the forest was another task the Duna axemen enjoyed. Judging by the rate they made helpads, they could have cleared Terania Creek in an afternoon. Once people and food supplies were flown in, the task of the locals was to cut firewood and help in the construction of camp comforts. Civilized base camps meant greater efficiency in cooking, caving, computing survey data and drawing up the cave maps.

Once caving began in earnest we realized the great potential of our area. Some parties spent the first month of

A swirling cloud of spray saturates a caver even before he goes underground.

the trip exploring areas of Mt Legari, at Hegaibagu and looking for further extensions to the Atea Kananda. A small party discovered a five kilometre cave in the cliffs above the Nali which would have been an old outflow of the Atea River. The most productive area was the Mamo Plateau, and by the end of the expedition all the expedition members were involved in exploration of caves in this region.

In the last weeks of the Atea 78 expedition a handful of cavers found a cave eight kilometres long on Mamo. It was nowhere near fully explored in 1978, so provided an excellent prospect for investigation during Muller 82. Within the first week the cavers at the Mamo IV camp had extended the cave by ten kilometres and found a new level of passages which was the key to many subsequent discoveries.

The Deepest?

● MOST CAVERS HAVE A PASSION FOR DEPTH and verticality, so even though previous exploration on the Muller Range had yielded mainly horizontal cave, most of the cavers at Mamo V camp were passionately hoping, and half convinced, that our cave would go deep. During the first days of exploration, when Kananda Pugwa (loosely, 'very large house') led down several pitches into a descending stream, it seemed they would not be disappointed.

Excitement in the camp grew with each returning party. There was only one major lead but that was still descending a streamway, so each evening the survey data was impatiently calculated for depth. Each day a self-selected party, usually of the faster, more experienced cavers, followed the 'downstream lead', surveying and rigging a little further before returning to calculate their data and announce how deep they'd gone. After three days the passage had been pushed to 390 metres, purely compared to the world's deepest — presently the Gouffre Jean-Bernard in France at 1,494 metres — but already the deepest on the Muller Range and still going down steeply. Our next target was to exceed New Guinea's deepest, Bibina, at 496 metres.

Four days later little depth had been added. Much of the time had been spent waiting for floodwaters to recede and cavers to return one group, going under for a normal day trip, had been caught deep by rising waters and had to wait them out in a relatively dry alcove for two days. Three of us planned a descent for the next day but rain in the afternoon reduced our hopes. The early morning climber to check the rain gauge showed 23 millimetres, which meant yet another day of waiting spent pleasantly watching birds of paradise and swiftlets, while sunbaking on the helpad until the clouds rolled in. Then it was back to the camp to eat pancakes and catch up on a little biological work.

● Bee-beep, bee-beep. The alarm wakes me, I half dress and stumble up to the helpad. The rain gauge reads three and a half millimetres. I slop back down the muddy track in the early morning glow, convincing myself that caving will be good — for a change at least; it's three or four days since I've been under. I wake a few others and pack lunch, plenty of spare food and a heap of biological gear. A little breakfast, then climb into wet and cold overalls and boots. The others aren't ready yet so I head off alone. Once you're moving, the pre-trip inertia dissipates. I've warmed up by the first abseil where the last glimmer of daylight is left behind. The second pitch is always a delight — one foot in an etrier, the other on the wall, and thirty-odd metres of blackness below as you reach out the lead your descender. Once I make Dragons Reach, a large collapse chamber where the route rejoins the stream, I'm feeling positively enthusiastic. Up the stream a little way to drop in a net and look for critters — the cave's biology is one of my tasks — then I stumble through the rockpile following some cairns. I get lost, return to the entry pitch, then follow the cairns more carefully to the exit, abseil and find myself in a stream again. I put another net into a small pool before heading off downstream. The nets are simply cones of fine nylon cloth with a wire hoop at one end and a specimen bottle attached at the other. The idea is that all sorts of small animals are washed into the net and concentrated in the specimen tube. If the current is fairly strong, most can't swim back out.



Going down Paul Dyson in Thunder Rush At Warid

The stream improves rapidly — a narrow, clean-walled canyon with numerous climbs down small waterfalls and dips into clear pools. As the passage widens a roar ahead indicates where the main stream crashes in through the roof. I'm now directly below Dragons Reach. Finally Paul catches up to me, he'd forgotten part of his prussik rig and had to return to get it. It's now after 9 am and we have to be back at this point by about 2 pm in case rain on the surface causes the canyon below us to flood. We move on, into the passage titled Thunder Rush, a sharp drop in the canyon with numerous small waterfalls and plenty of turbulent water. I carefully wade the race above the waterfalls and abseil down, tensioning on to a boulder just out of the torrent. There's water raining from the roof, a strong wind and abundant noise. Sheltering from the spray, I stand back and let Paul and Rolan through — let those who know lead the way — this is the first time I've been involved in quite such intricate rope-work. We rope down drops and traverse over or tension round pools for another 100 metres before a 12 metre abseil, anchored well out on the wall, drops us under the cascade into a wider passage. Spray put out my carbide light and its flint is wet, so I stumble over to the others using my electric torch and then have a short break while re-lighting the lamps. From now on we'll have half a mind thinking of the consequences of high water, and the thoughts will urge us to move fast and turn back by 1 pm — none of us have any desire to spend two or three days down here or to be caught in Thunder Rush as a flood pulse comes through.

We descend a little further then wade a long narrow pool — icy Armpits. The name sums up the passage well. We're now travelling almost horizontally, there is less water about and it's mostly in still, dark pools. There are a few short drops but in several places the roof drops to below water level and we are forced to climb up and round the sump. Eventually we descend into a large passage with tall, steep mud-banks dropping to small, still pools. The mud is sticky

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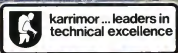


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The cave passages in the Mamo system were carved out by the many paths of a few streams encountered in the cave. We had yet to find these streams on the surface and follow their whole courses. A few days' track cutting, and we had found the 'sinking streams' visible on the air photos but so elusive to find on previous expeditions. Following their courses provided some of the most exciting, wet, sporting caving of the entire expedition. An unexpected bonus from an inauspicious start was a completely different cave system, Kananda Pugwa (meaning 'huge cave' in the local Duna language).

For the second month of the trip we were pushing two caves. The Mamo cave continued to grow until it overtook Atea Kananda and itself became the longest cave in the Southern

Great rivers disappear underground.

hemisphere. The huge entrance chamber of Kananda Pugwa became the second camp on Mamo for this expedition, and the fifth altogether, Mamo V. This cave was large in all dimensions; its entrance chamber ended in a series of long pitches into a dry streamway which dropped by another pitch into another huge chamber. Beyond this, another long pitch dropped to a stream of awesome size. Exploration of this section and the passage beyond was made with a healthy respect for the dangers involved. A caver in Thunder Rush, as it became known, could easily be swept away by a flash flood. One party exploring the depths of the cave, beyond the streamway, had to wait out a flood until the water level dropped so that they could return to the surface. There was a cold, miserable 54-hour wait with little food. Those cavers in camp had no communication with the underground party and all they could do was to wait anxiously, hoping the cavers were not in the main streamway when it flooded.

The big, deep passages of Kananda Pugwa were a great contrast with the smaller, more shallow horizontal passages of the Mamo cave. It was as if the two caves were separate yet so close they almost overlapped. The Mamo cave was a most complicated system of intertwined passages that joined one another in a maze which radiated in all directions, even towards Kananda Pugwa, now eight kilometres long. The Mamo cave was now 37 kilometres long and had earned a place among the world's top 20 long caves.

We were camped in the entrance of a cave of vast length. A kilometre away another group of cavers was camped at

yet slippery, and despite carefully kicking steps we all take uncontrolled slides down to rocks or pools. This passage, known as the Doldrums, is horrifying. Its irregular floor and awful mud-banks reach perhaps eight metres up to the roof yet all the previous party's footprints have been partly obliterated by flood waters. We guess the water would rise slowly but have no wish to see it happen — this is no place to be trapped.

Eventually we kick, slither and wade to the pool where the preceding party finished exploration. We refill our carbide lights and prepare to survey. With our stillness the cave becomes even more threatening — a drip of water into a pool is amplified until we expect a wall of water to race down on us. It's time to move again. The final survey point from last time, a mud cairn, has been washed away, so we build another and leave the survey gap to be filled by a later party. Rolan leads off. As soon as possible he clambers through a hole in the boulders that form one side of the roof — anything to be out of this awful passage!

The transformation is remarkable. We are in a long, relatively straight passage 10-12 metres wide, five metres high and floored with flat, dry, consolidated mud. As we survey 50 metre legs (if only the tape was longer), almost jogging between stations, the name Silent Running is bestowed. Silent Running progressively enlarges, then opens suddenly to a huge chamber floored with rockfall — we survey along one wall, not being able to see the other or the roof. A waterfall drops in from a passage above as the rockfall slopes down again. The chamber narrows till we can see both walls. It's time we went back but it's difficult to turn round when there's so much to look at. Despite the remoteness and threat of flooding, we decide to push just a little further. Still on rockfall floor, and still descending slowly, we reach a dropaway. A scree leads down 20 metres or so but we stop the survey at the top. Rolan and

Paul go down to look around while I build a cairn and hunt for insects or spiders. We devour a block of chocolate and head back up. As we pick our way along the floor of the large chamber we name it Space Oddity — it's odd having so much space around us. Then we're jogging along Silent Running to return to the mud and menace of the Doldrums. Have we got to -500 metres? Even speculation is impossible as we concentrate on front-pointing in the mud (oh, for crampons!) and grovelling through the boulder squeezes.

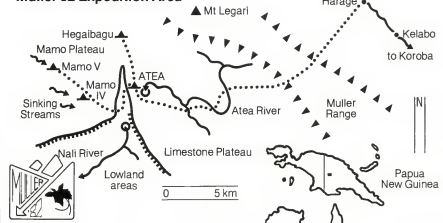
At last we're at the base of Thunder Rush, somewhat breathless but less anxious, we're almost out and the water isn't up — yet. On with the prussik rig and then 20 minutes of jangling, penduluming and wading and we're above the noise, water and grandeur of Thunder Rush. We split up, there's little risk now. I stop often to consign a slater or spider to death by intoxication — drowning in a tube of alcohol — or to collect my nets before leisurely returning up the shafts to camp. The camp chamber is dark so I look at my watch. It's 8 pm — no wonder I'm so tired. The data is already calculated — we got to -480 metres — and we know there's another 20 metres down there. We're the deepest in New Guinea!

After devouring all food placed before me, I settle down to write my log and sort tubes of specimens. It was a good day's catch, nothing particularly startling but plenty of animals from the nets. Thorough identification back in Sydney will probably yield one or two new specimens.

Several subsequent parties pushed the cave to about -520 metres but couldn't find a way beyond the rubble floor of Space Oddity. The eventual result was that our group surveyed over eight kilometres and a new deepest cave for New Guinea, discovering some very spectacular, and rather risky, passage in the three weeks of New Guinea camp.

Brian Evans

Muller 82 Expedition Area



the entrance to a very deep cave. With hopes of a connection, a group from our camp descended into the darkness. We sat in camp exhausted from the hectic pace of exploration. At 4 pm a voice crackled over the radio announcing the connection. Our cave was instantly 45 kilometres, and celebration was spontaneous. We had discovered Mamo Kananda — The Master Cave.

Within a week of this most unlikely connection, we had taken our cave to a length of 52 kilometres and the eleventh longest in the world. At a depth of 528

metres it was also the deepest cave in Papua New Guinea.

For nine years, in the course of four expeditions, cavers have been searching for a truly great cave on New Guinea's Muller Range. Their hopes were rewarded. Papua New Guinea is one of the last unexplored wilderness areas on earth. Great rivers disappear underground — the caves are forming fast. They are big, and deep. We proved this is the ideal place to find a new cave of world class — and Mamo Kananda is still going.



In the of the Exp

Bushwalking and history in the Blue Moun



Tracks plorers

ains; with Greg Powell.

● AS THE SUN SETS ON EACH WEEK-END, small groups of weary bushwalkers emerge from the scrub fringing Blue Mountains hamlets. They head homewards towards Sydney, confident in the knowledge that they have lived well with nature and looking forward to the next excursion in the wild.

A little less than 200 years ago, hardy groups of walkers were treading the same ridges and gullies that we find so picturesque today. They were there for vastly different reasons, seeking beyond the ranges for open country that might be used by the struggling colony for stock grazing and agriculture. They were the early European explorers of the Blue Mountains, the forgotten men who tried and failed to find a way through the tangled, precipitous ridges which lie not far west of Sydney. The routes the explorers took lie within some of today's most popular bushwalking regions, and it is a tribute to their perseverance that the terrain that halted their western progress remains even today too rugged for development.

So the bush becomes a sort of time machine that binds us to those first white Australian bushwalkers. The bush is a living history book waiting to be read, and a small group of us decided to go out and study it.

Only one year after the First Fleet arrived in the new colony of New South Wales, Lieutenant William Dawes led a small party in to the wild ravines across the Nepean River. We followed his route down to Linden Creek, west of Faulconbridge. This is a steep and pleasant gully, but we could not but wonder what impression it made on the minds of Europeans in 1789.

We clambered up the cliffline on the western escarpment and trudged along the dry, rocky ridges towards Mt Twiss, then sat on its rocky platform and gazed westward to Mt Hay as Dawes must have done. Mt Hay lay across the Wentworth Creek Gorge and we were thankful that the good Lieutenant of Marines had broken off his quest here because he did not feel like tackling such an appalling obstacle as the Gorge presented. Neither did we.

A few hours later we emerged from the bush at Linden where we had left our cars, but the hapless Dawes and his party had been obliged to retrace their steps over the broken ground that they had just spent days breaking a way through.

William Paterson, who came into prominence during the hectic days of the Rum Rebellion, was the next to seek a route across the mountain barrier. His plan was to travel by boat along the Grose River, and walking along the sandy bed of the Grose above Yarramundi it was hard to realize that this

was the river on which Paterson's whale boats struggled upstream in 1793. It appeared even more incredible when we entered the Gorge where the river bed became a series of cascades and pools that were frequently blocked by huge sandstone boulders. Although Paterson and his men would have had to manhandle their wooden boats past these obstructions, the expedition still managed to get as far as Wentworth Cave (which Paterson named Canopy Cliffs) before, with the boats full of holes, they also were forced to return to the relative comfort of the colonial settlement.

Only a bushwalker who has walked up the Grose River can appreciate the hardships that faced Paterson and his flimsy fleet. Even today the Grose Gorge must be treated with respect, and those who take it too lightly often find

We had five days behind us and two to go: Barrallier measured his progress in weeks.

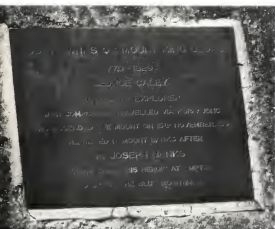
themselves in a worse predicament than did the 1793 expedition. There are few exits from the Gorge, and all involve long, hard climbs. We chose the Faulconbridge Point Track and left the cool waters of the Grose far below for the long dry slog to Faulconbridge.

With a new century came a new approach to the problem presented by the Blue Mountains. In 1802, Ensign Francis Barrallier's expedition set out to attack them from the south. In 1982 we waded waist deep across the Nepean River near Menangle Park, where the Frenchman's men had been forced to dismantle and carry the carts. Their next obstacle was the Razorback Range. Next time your car climbs slowly behind a semi-trailer up this range, think of the explorers and bushwalkers who have walked over it. It is a gruelling experience.

Barrallier turned westward near the present site of Picton, so we obediently did likewise. Barrallier left detailed descriptions of his route but they have two major drawbacks: his logs were written in French, and either he exaggerated or his translators misinterpreted his writings. We were able, however, to relate his journal and map to the landmarks around us. Lake Burragong blocked the route and had to be skirted, so leaving the valleys of the Nattai and the Wollondilly behind, we entered the beautiful Yerranderie region.

Barrallier and his men camped here beside the tranquil Tonalli River, little

In 1793 Paterson dragged his boats along this section of the Grose River Gorge! (Seen here in more recent times from above Faulconbridge Point.) All photos Powell



Sculptured sandstone above the Grose River Gorge near Faulconbridge Point, and below, a plaque commemorating the attempts of one explorer to penetrate such country.

knowing that beneath their feet lay rich deposits of silver which would eventually lead to the establishment of a thriving town. There was no town there when we arrived either, the only signs of its existence being a few crumbling buildings

overgrown with wattles. Man comes, man goes. The bush remains.

We followed Barrallier through the pass in the range now known as Byrnes Gap, and then made the steep descent to the Kowmung River, and camped with Barrallier at its junction with Christys Creek. We had five days behind us and two to go: Barrallier measured his progress in weeks.

Like Barrallier we climbed, swam, scrambled and chopped our way along the course of Christys Creek until we too came face to face with the obstacle that defeated Barrallier. Barralliers Falls were the last straw for the Frenchman and he decided to lead his ragged party back to Sydney which was many days' walk behind them. Our party clambered up the rocky slopes on to Kanangra Tops, where we were able to look back over our entire route and thought of the unfortunate 1802 party struggling towards their starting point.

With the southern Blue Mountains seemingly more impenetrable than the central section, it is not surprising that the next assault on the ranges was

made further north. Unlike his predecessors, George Caley was not a military man but a botanist, who set out in 1804 on the journey which he thought would solve the problem once and for all.

After our ordeal climbing the Razor-back Range following Barrallier, we decided not to follow Caley's footsteps up the formidable Kurrajong Heights. Instead we picked up his route on top of the western escarpment then plunged in to Bushfire Swamp, so named because it is here that Caley's men accidentally started a bushfire.

Descending by Dark Valley where, like Caley before us, we too had to lower our packs by ropes, we reached the Grose River at a place Caley called the Devil's Wilderness. No sooner had we arrived than we began the long hard climb back to the ridge tops on the western side. We understood how the explorer felt when he wrote of being parched and having to suck native berries. It was a long hard climb. Eventually tree fern clad Mt Tomah loomed ahead. From this impressive height we took bearings on Caley's objective, Mt Banks. It looked relatively close, but the ground between was dissected with canyons, ridges and cliffs which took their toll on time and energy. Our group was not close to mutiny as Caley's was, but we were feeling the strain after four days of walking.

Skirting northward of Caley's Dismal Dingle, we eventually climbed a ridge that brought us to the summit of Mt Banks. From here Caley had hoped to see his way to the west, but these hopes were dashed. Below us lay an impossible barrier, the serpentine Grose Gorge. The disillusioned botanist made the same fateful decision as his predecessors had been forced to make. While we admired the grand spectacle surrounding us, our cars waiting below in the picnic area, Caley set out on the heartbreaking return journey to Sydney,

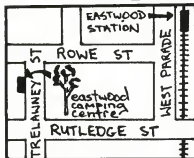
Our group was not
as close to mutiny
as Caley's

little knowing how close he had come to the western edge of the mountains.

As for we modern explorers, we felt our exercise in historical research had been more than worth all the time and effort involved. Hours of library work had convinced us we had accurately followed the steps of some notable early explorers. Not only had we had some excellent bushwalking — we had transported ourselves back through time and felt we knew something of how those forgotten explorers must have felt as they tackled the Australian bush for the first time. ●



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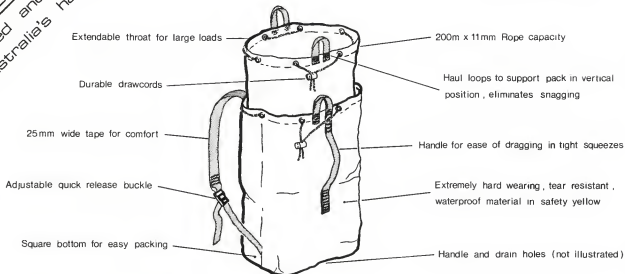


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● HAVE YOU EVER VISITED A WILD AND beautiful place and said to yourself, 'Wouldn't it be just great to live here'? As a youth I was able to visit Queensland's Granite Belt on the southern border highlands on many occasions. When the opportunity arose, my decision to accept employment in the Granite Belt's capital, Stanthorpe, was a foregone conclusion. That was 17 years ago.

Near the Queensland-New South Wales border 11,400 hectares of magnificent rugged granite country is preserved within this 'place of flowers', Girraween National Park.

Alan Cunningham was the first European to marvel at the 'large detached masses of every shape towering one above the other'. Today these majestic outcrops watch over an annual influx of almost 30,000 visitors. Most people are content to explore the graded trails or to picnic beside Bald Rock Creek which runs through the Park. A unique information centre in the middle of the Park supplies literature, illustrations and maps of most aspects of this wonderland. For the keener naturalist and bushwalker, Girraween offers unlimited scope for study and adventure.

I have returned to Girraween time and

again over the past 25 years and every visit has been an 'experience' with something new and rewarding.

Situated on an elevated granite plateau, the contrasts of weather in Girraween produce a wide variety of flora and fauna which is 'different'. While summer days can be hot, it is not uncommon for menacing thunderheads to unleash spectacular rain and hail storms. Autumn is ideal for walking. Cool and clear days mean that cameras are brought out to record the subtle beauty of frost-tinged foliage. Occa-

Anyone for marbles? South Bald Rock, Girraween National Park. All photos Walker

Granite Wonderland

Errol Walker shares his enthusiasm for Queensland's most spectacular granite mountain scenery.



sionally winter snowfalls can temporarily change the whole scene. It is not hard to imagine how frost, ice and snow have fashioned the incredible granite shapes we see today. By August, shy ground orchids lift their heads and abundant acacia buds welcome the warmer months. Spring on the Granite Belt ushers in one of the finest wildflower

A granite landscape of bewildering complexity.

displays in Australia. Nowhere else in Queensland is the change of season quite so dramatic.

Nearly dividing Girraween National Park, picturesque Bald Rock Creek has carved its image in a thousand different ways. Long sections of the creek disappear underground and may only be explored with the aid of torches. Other stretches lie deep and cool, framed delicately by the foliage of ti-tree, acacia or bottle brush. My favourite place on the creek is The Junction. Here, at the junction of Ramsay Creek with Bald Rock Creek, the cascading water runs clear and wide through a broad dished granite valley.

The slopes of the valley through which Bald Rock Creek flows are frequently covered with wildflowers and are scattered with giant boulders. These have rolled from the granite heights and provide shelter for the Park's birds and animals which include wombats, tiger cats and the superb lyrebird.

It is the high country that has always fascinated me. Millions of years have exposed a granite landscape of bewildering complexity. The remarkable Pyramids, two immense granite domes rising from open forested ridges near Bald Rock Creek and the Park picnic areas, dominate the centre of the Park. Views from either summit embrace all of Girraween and the Queensland-New South Wales border highlands beyond. The blue haze of distance reveals massive expanses of bare granite and ominous silhouettes of granite boulders balanced one upon the other.

The Pyramids are not the only grandstand for spectacular vistas; the whole reserve is dotted throughout with many other high domes. The nature of granite weathering produces distinctive rounded hills, a form of erosion called exfoliation or 'onion skin weathering'. There are many such examples of exfoliation and it may be observed in the smallest pebbles as well as in the classical shapes of the mountains.

Mt Norman, at 1,267 metres above sea level, is the highest mountain in Girraween National Park. A remarkable formation, the Eye of the Needle clings to the side of Mt Norman and is a focal point for photographers and rockclimbers.

Recent years have seen an unprecedented demand for more granite wilderness areas to be included in the National Park, and the Queensland Government has acquired many hectares of high country near the State border. This remote area has now been added to the National Park Estate and it includes what is possibly the most spectacular granite mountain scenery in Queensland.

South Bald Rock is among these new acquisitions. Here the spectacle of hectares of bare granite featuring dozens of balancing tors is almost unbelievable. A deep crevice neatly slices this mountain in two. Boulders have rolled from their insecure positions to lodge within the gap, and in so doing have formed a cavern in which flourishes plant life generally alien to the Granite Belt. Tree ferns and dry rainforest have established themselves, bats frequent the darker areas and a small water course flows for almost a kilometre through the defile. The crevice can be negotiated on foot but it does entail a few tight spots. Cameras and bare skin can, and usually do, suffer from the incredibly rough surface of the granite in the squeezes. On one midsummer trip to South Bald Rock I found hailstones packed a metre deep in the crevice. There had been no storm activity in the area for the past three weeks.

Early settlers must have had a difficult time finding names for the granite formations. There are romantic names such as Aztec Temple, Sphinx Rock and The Pyramids, but just as you start to wonder what country you have landed yourself in, reality returns with some good old Australian logic and there are South Bald Rock, West Bald Rock and the one in between? Middle Rock of course! Strangely, one of the most unusual balancing rocks remains unnamed to this day.

Girraween is truly a National Park for family enjoyment and activity. There are excellent graded paths that enable the elderly to view a good cross section of

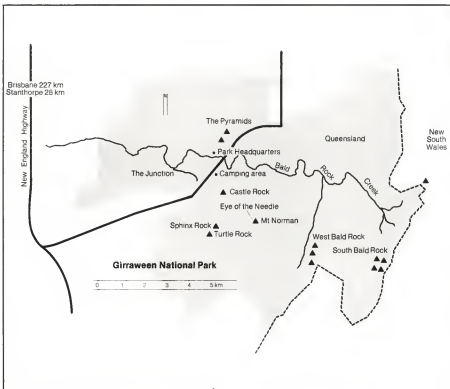
Girraween offers unlimited scope for study and adventure.

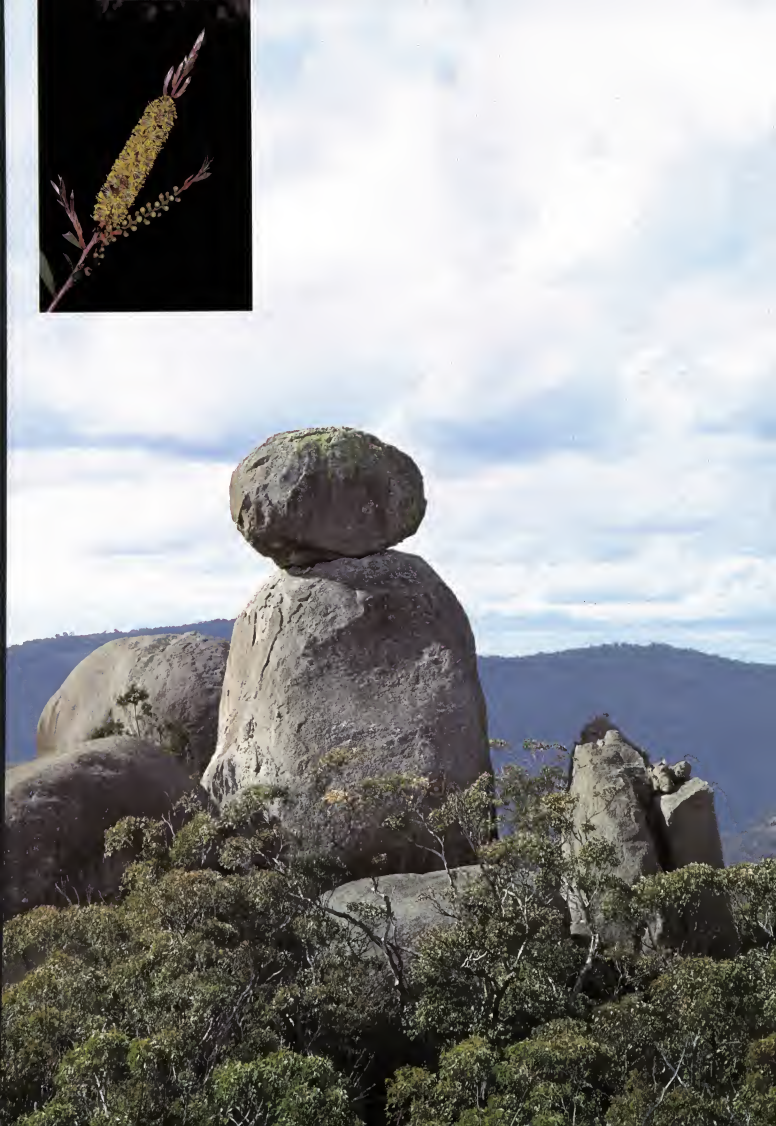
the Park features, and a couple of kilometres from Park Headquarters these paths become well marked tracks that remain within the scope of the average walker.

And then there are the challenges provided by scrub-bashing, negotiation of high, exposed slopes and rockclimbing. Mt Norman alone caters for each of these pursuits as well as being a paradise, on its lower slopes, for wildflower watchers. There are also remote ridges beyond the familiar tourist-trodden tracks where one can feel far removed from civilization.

I still enjoy re-exploring and photographing these wilderness areas. There is a new experience for every visit; at Girraween nature is still in charge. ●

The Sphinx, Girraween, and inset, swamp bottle brush.





GORE-TEX® DOWN UNDER

GORE-TEX® A Brief History

GORE-TEX® Fabric was introduced in the northern hemisphere in 1976 through qualified manufacturers of garments, tents and sleeping bags. Developed through advanced technology, GORE-TEX® Fabric is still the most breathable, completely water-proof and wind-proof fabric in existence.

By late 1978, through the combined efforts of manufacturers and consumers plus extensive research and development, GORE-TEX® Fabric was modified substantially to become an "easy care" product. Care and washing instructions were simplified dramatically.

1980 saw a further advance with a breakthrough in seam sealing technology. The GORE Seam Sealing Machine allows seams to be permanently and effectively sealed at the time the product is manufactured.

Progress has continued and new laminating techniques now permit GORE-TEX® Fabric to be used in a variety of new applications including running shoes, hiking boots, fashion footwear, X-C ski boots and ski gloves.

GORE-TEX® Fabric is simply the most functional fabric on the market at this time for all-weather protection and comfort.

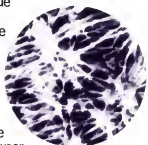
GORE-TEX® Fabrics by Alp Sports and Wilderness Products.

Many other progressive manufacturers of quality gear and garments for outdoor pursuits now incorporate GORE-TEX® Fabric in their ranges as the premium performance product.

Some of these Australian and New Zealand products made in GORE-TEX® Fabrics are illustrated and reader enquiries directed to the manufacturers will be welcomed and given prompt attention.

What is GORE-TEX® Fabric?

It is a combination of the unique GORE-TEX® membrane and woven and knit outerwear fabrics. While the shell and liner fabrics provide strength and durability, the key to performance is the GORE-TEX® membrane which is microporous, yet hydrophobic (water-proof). The result of this combination is water-proof, wind-proof, and durable garments which are comfortable to wear because moisture inside is allowed to evaporate and escape.



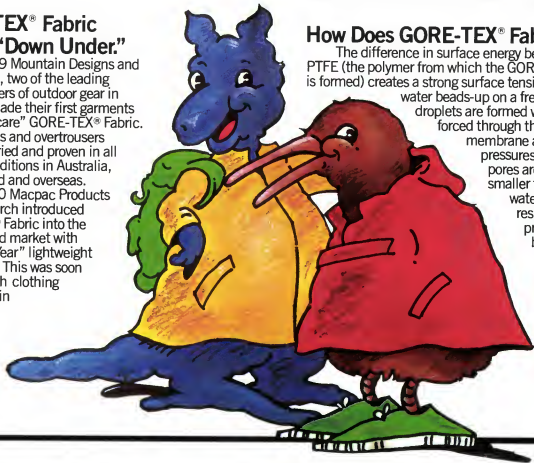
GORE-TEX® Fabric Arrives "Down Under."

In 1979 Mountain Designs and Paddymade, two of the leading manufacturers of outdoor gear in Australia, made their first garments from "easy care" GORE-TEX® Fabric. These parkas and overtrousers have been tried and proven in all weather conditions in Australia, New Zealand and overseas.

In 1980 Macpac Products of Christchurch introduced GORE-TEX® Fabric into the New Zealand market with the "Light Year" lightweight tunnel tent. This was soon followed with clothing accessories in

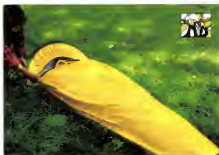
How Does GORE-TEX® Fabric Work?

The difference in surface energy between water and PTFE (the polymer from which the GORE-TEX® membrane is formed) creates a strong surface tension, and much like water beads-up on a freshly waxed car, water droplets are formed which can only be forced through the GORE-TEX® membrane at very high pressures. This is because its pores are many times smaller than the individual water droplets. The result is water-proofness equal to or better than most coated fabrics.





Top-Mac



Gore-Tex®

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Trade enquiries: **WL Gore & Associates (Australia) Pty Ltd** PO Box 99 Frenchs Forest NSW 2086 Telex 73355 Answerback code OZGORE Telephone (02) 977 7777
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477 7355

Wasted Youth

How Australia's
'International
Turkey Patrol'
fared on the
spectacular
Himalayan peak,
Changabang; by
Craig Nottle.



● **MOVE! GO ON, QUICK. GET UP AND help!** You heard him. Come on, what's wrong with you? No-one likes cooking up here, especially in this weather. And never forget that food and drink are essential...

They sure are, I think to myself as I prepare to emerge from my doss. Firstly I rearrange my gloves, then wrestle with some zippers until finally I can flip the lid of my bivvy sack over my head. Smack! Thanks wind, I didn't expect a warm welcome. It's still snowing. Roddy's tent fly is flapping in the wind; he doesn't have a bivvy bag. I poke my head under the fly and the problem presents itself. The stove is out. I grab the pot and Roddy flicks the lighter until at last the burner is alight. I replace the pot and return to my bag. To my right Jon and Mark remain unmoved. They are asleep and it's still snowing.

The ledge we were on lies at about 6,500 metres (20,500 feet) on the South Pillar of the peak Changabang in the Garhwal Himalayas of northern India. Between us and the summit was a further 700 metres of gendarmed ridge and 1,100 metres below us was the Rhamani Glacier freshly covered in snow. We'd reached our position after three days' climbing from our advance base camp on the glacier at 5,300 metres. We'd begun our climb up the Japanese South-west Ridge route. Like most of the routes on Changabang, it involves difficulties on both rock and ice. We followed their route for two days, spending the second night on a cramped ledge. From there, avoiding the time-consuming Japanese rock tower, we traversed rightwards on an ice-band to the Italian South Pillar route. From that position, at the end of the third day, we had enough food to continue to the summit, but only if the weather remained fine.

Both the Japanese in 1976 and the Italians in 1981 had sieged their routes. This involved fixing ropes to a point from where they could launch a summit attack. To avoid the danger and dullness of constantly using fixed ropes, let alone the expense, we had chosen to attempt our climb using 'Alpine style' tactics. This would involve carrying everything we needed in our rucksacks and climbing in one push to the top. Such a plan may sound wonderfully adventurous, but it also involves climbing with a 20 kilogram sack which makes even easy climbing difficult. There is also a greater reliance on good weather using these tactics, and retreat can be problematic.

At dawn on the fourth day we'd seen ominous clouds whipping over the summit of nearby Nanda Devi. At Mt Cook in New Zealand a similar sign would have

prompted a quick descent, but the Garhwal isn't renowned for murderous storms so we thought this might pass briefly and allow us to continue. It was the first Himalayan climbing any of us had done, and Roddy, who was keenest to descend, expressed his doubts: 'We don't know a thing about the Himalayas.'

'Yes! But the Himalayas don't know about us, the ITP!'

The International Turkey Patrol climbing group could hardly be expected to trouble the Himalayas, but Jon's comic reply gave us something to chuckle over

chain down the wall, which turned out to be over 50 metres high!

Having anchored the chain's upper end, Mark lowered himself down the chain hand over hand. At its end he was still 10 metres from the snow slope below. A moment of indecision passed before he yelled out:

'Oh well, no use in hanging around' and let go of the chain!

Thankfully he landed in a powder-snow drift and slid safely down the snow slope. It was OK. The seriousness of the situation was shortly replaced by a more comical mood. Roddy, Jon and I rolled



as we spent the day waiting for the weather to improve.

Next morning, as another storm prepared to engulf us, no discussion was necessary. We packed quickly to start the descent before it began snowing. My sleeping mat seemed to be the keenest of all — fluttering off down to the glacier before I could pack it! We followed the Italian route, making 50 metre abseils before reaching the Italian Col, which lies between the Changabang and Rhamani Glaciers. Below the col, on the Rhamani side, is a 250 metre rock wall, which drops sharply to a series of snowed-up slabs and the glacier below.

We continued abseiling, leaving our four 50 metre ropes on the lower four-fifths of the rock wall. From there we down-climbed part of the slabs until we reached a continuous rock band blocking our way. There were few options left; it was late afternoon, it was snowing heavily and our ropes were too high to retrieve. We initially estimated the band to be about 15 metres high, so taking the last vaguely sensible course of action, we tied all our slings and hardware together and lowered our makeshift

the rucksacks off and watched them somersault down the slope before apprehensively queuing to repeat the down-climbing process like kindergarten children about to experience their first slide ride! We spent the night at advance camp, with the score: Changabang 1; Turkey Patrol 0.

Thankfully he landed in a powder-snow drift.

Next morning the sun was shining, but it was too late. We returned to base camp making tracks in the fresh snow. Despite our experience, Changabang had lost none of its beauty. Its white granite flanks shone in the sun, giving the mountain a tantalizing appeal and a surrealistic appearance against the deep blue sky. We could only wait. At base camp the questions from Elke, Brigitte and our liaison officer Anil were often difficult to answer. How can you clearly explain the way every movement

The final 'abseil' down a 40 metre chain of slings during the epic retreat in storm after the first attempt! Mark Moorhead descends while Rod McKenzie waits his turn. Above, Jon Muir bivouacking at the high-point reached before the storm. All colour photos Nottie



is crippled when the sun has set? Or how quickly finger-tips can blanch when the wind strikes them?

We spent five days at base camp relaxing and eating before returning to the advance camp. Since the storm, the area had become noticeably colder. Some of the creeks had frozen up and the weather had taken on a pattern of fine mornings, snow in the afternoon and clear nights.

The second attempt began with more determination; it would be our last chance. We reached the lower end of the 'chain' on the short rock wall after some delicate aid climbing and carefully climbed the slabs above to the base of the ropes we'd left. Fortunately the Jumaring passed without incident, and

The snow Changabang 1 Turkoy Patrol 0

from the top of the ropes we continued to the Italian Col above. I reached the col at dusk as a full moon was rising in the east. Our bivouac site that night was sheer luxury; it was spacious and would receive the sun's first rays.

By 9.30 next morning we had packed away the technicolour chaos of our bivvy and begun climbing. On the descent we had partly familiarized ourselves with the climbing back to our high-point and it promised to be good. The route took in several short difficult rock sections amidst easier rock and ice traverses. We were well acclimatized and able to climb quickly. At the high-point Roddy and I, who were the leading pair on that day, left our rucksacks and climbed the rest of the nearby snow patch. From the top of the snow patch the route went up a steep corner. It was my turn to lead and I was keen to free climb as much of it as possible. At first it felt incongruous bridging widely on small holds but soon I had the confidence to exert myself fully. Using an enjoyable series of finger jams and layback moves, I climbed the corner until it led to easier ground above. Roddy followed the pitch and quickly led another before we left the ropes and abseiled back down to the bivvy, elated at our progress.

The next day we left our ledge, thankful not to return. One pitch above our ropes lay the snow dome, where the angle of the route eased and its difficulties were hidden amongst gendarmes and short ice slopes of the ridge above. We knew the Japanese had spent seven days on the ridge before reaching the summit. The bolts and rem-



nants of fixed ropes at the top of the dome partly explained the week's work.

Beginning the ridge at midday we managed to climb five pitches before bivouacking. No pitch on this section was very difficult, but a great deal of care was necessary. The bivvy site we chose was a snow-covered gendarme. It was the best available, but, even so, forced us to excavate separate sites because of its awkward shape. By the time we began settling down, the sun had set and the air was rapidly cooling. Through necessity we'd come to respect the cold, which would drop to -20° Centigrade at night. In our planning, tents had been rejected because of their weight, so it was vital to be warmly settled in a sleeping bag and bivvy sack before cooking commenced.

It was clear next morning and Mark quickly climbed the next major feature, a 40 metre gendarme split by a wide crack. From its top we could see the summit, but it was difficult to piece together a route through the ridge's complex features. By winding our way round some short rock towers on snow and ice slopes we were able to avoid the more obvious difficulties until we came

to a short rock slab covered with unstable snow. The slab was effectively holdless and, as if to increase the severity, the snow partly crumbled away under Jon who led this desperate section.

The slab proved to be our last major obstacle. A small storm passed over us as we climbed a further five rope-lengths to the start of the summit snowfield where the angle eased and we unroped to climb separately. I was the last to come up on this section and I climbed with my mind counting the steps from one to 30 and thinking of when I could do more Himalayan climbing in the future. I reached the summit at dusk as the others were beginning to prepare a bivvy site in the snow. It was only a few metres from the summit and an excellent spot to doss! Our ascent had taken two days less than we'd anticipated and Jon and I had a quiet giggle at our success. To celebrate, we ate a double meal while taking in the view of nearby Tibet and Nepal.

By 10 am next morning we'd packed up, taken a few snaps and begun our descent of the East Ridge. Another Australian team had climbed this route

Moorhead at the bivouac site on the Italian Col during the successful attempt. The South Face of Changabang rears up behind. Above, Moorhead (top), Muir and Mackenzie near the summit.

Rock'n'roll is dead



Even in the most difficult climbing situations, the A.B. System effectively eliminates any rucksac instability.

For the first time a sac with proven adjustability and air-flow comfort can provide total stability. This is a result of the unique design of the internal frame, and the new adjustment system incorporating independent top tension straps.

Previously unattainable in any large capacity sac, unrestricted head movement is now possible with A.B. This is ensured by the revolutionary "Occipital Cavity" at the base of the lid.

Move into the 80's with the A.B. System - a new rucksac generation.

*Cosimo Zappelli and the A.B. System
on Mount McKinley in 1982.*



For further technical information and NEW full colour catalogue write to Dept. M.



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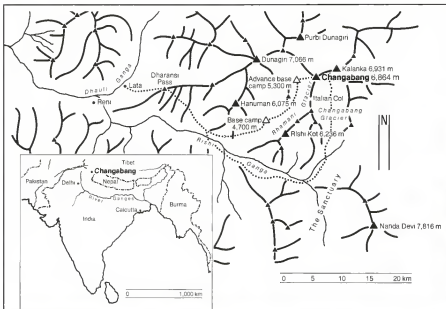
in 1980. They'd enjoyed good snow conditions so we'd hoped for a straightforward way down. But it was not to be.

The ridge and its surrounding slopes were covered in very hard water ice. We completed one tenuous pitch of this before a decision was easily made and, using ice screws as anchors, we

abseiled to a broad snow platform on the southern side of the ridge. We waded along the fresh snow of the platform to another glazed slope. The afternoon's inevitable snow storm arrived and the old question of 'How the hell did I get into a situation like this?' cropped up again as we traversed on the ice slope

in appalling visibility. From the traverse's end we dodged round several crevasses before finding a suitable one to sleep in. The sky cleared overnight and we woke to sunshine.

We completed our descent to the Changabang Glacier on that, the sixth day, without incident. It felt good to be down and we slept amongst the boulders of the glacier's moraine. The tension of being on the mountain slackened on reaching this point. The climb was complete and all we wanted was to return to base camp. Originally we'd planned to climb back over a ridge to our advance camp on the Rhamani



Glacier, but we had the option of walking down the Changabang Glacier and through the Rishi Gorge back to our base camp. The next morning we chose to reject the former plan because the rock face below the ridge was plastered in fresh snow and the weather looked threatening. We started the walk that morning. We expected it to take about three days and we had food for three meals.

The walk began with a stumble down the snow-covered moraine of the Changabang Glacier until we found the track by the northern branch of the Rishi River. We followed the track to where it meets the Rishi's southern branch and slept in a cave at this junction. The following day, as we were entering the gorge's upper reaches, we met the Australian Nanda Devi team, who were walking out with their porters to the village of Lata. It was disappointing to hear illness had marred this attempt on India's highest peak. The four of us walked with their team for a day along the amazingly intricate track of the Rishi Gorge. We exchanged stories with them and ate everything they could spare!

On 11 October, the fourth day of our walk and the tenth since leaving advance base, we arrived back at base camp. It was time to stop. ●

Changabang's South-west Ridge, showing lines of the first attempt (on left) and successful attempt (right). The retreat and successful attempt followed the Italian Route. The first attempt was by the first part of the Japanese Route, then new ground to join the Italian Route somewhat lower than where the Japanese Route joins it. Above, wasted youth; Mackenzie (left), Nottle, Moorhead and Muir after the successful attempt. Moorhead

The introduction of our PolarWear range has caused quite a stir among climbers, sailors and other lovers of the outdoor life.

Because it offers a revolutionary alternative to bulky woollen sweaters and layer upon layer of protective clothing.

Our PolarWear jackets, for example, are incredibly light and comfortable.

But very, very warm.

The same goes for all the other clothes in the PolarWear range.

Read on, and we'll tell you how PolarWear works and why we think it is, quite simply, the best warm wear money can buy.

What makes PolarWear so warm and light?

The answer lies in the material.

PolarWear is made from Dacron pile fabric, a man-made fibre of remarkable insulating properties, but very little bulk.

Worn next to the skin, this 'furry' material is able to trap a large amount of air. The trapped layer of air is heated by the body and thus insulates you from the cold outside.

North Cape The garments to it's cold

Dacron's other important quality is that it is porous. It allows any perspiration to pass through the material to the outside, away from the body. Leaving the skin dry and the wearer comfortable.

To be honest, there are other makes of warm wear which are meant to work in a similar way to ours.

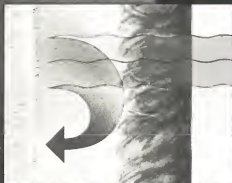
But Dacron is the most efficient and hard-wearing material for the job. North Cape use 100% Dacron for their PolarWear.

The PolarWear range.

First, the jackets.

There are five different styles in the North Cape range. (You can see them all at the top right hand side of the page).

The same care we used in



The 100mm tall pile in Dacron traps the maximum amount of air next to the skin. But it also allows perspiration to pass through to the outside, away from the body, so you stay warm and dry.

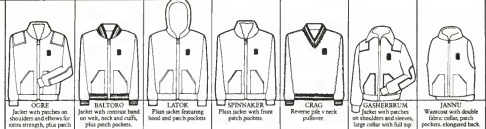
the choice of material is exercised right through to the finished garments.

The zips are made from Delrin, a heavy-duty plastic. With care they should last a lifetime.

The jackets are sewn together with high stress stitching thread and trimmed with long-lasting acrylic.

And the pockets and patches are double-seamed for extra durability.

Each jacket is available in three different colours, navy, red and olive, and a wide range of sizes to suit both men and



SPINNAKER

BALTORO

OGRE

PolarWear. be inside when outside.

women.

They also come in a choice of plain or laminated fabrics. (On the laminated version a finely knitted polyester scrim is bonded to the material. This prevents the jacket from pilling and improves wind resistance without altering any of its other properties).

North Cape also make PolarWear mitts, socks, undertrousers, a reverse pile pullover and a one-piece suit. Like our jackets, they're all extremely well finished.

In fact, so

confident are we in the quality of our PolarWear that we guarantee every garment against faulty workmanship.

North Cape. Our pedigree.

In 1976, Martin Boysen, Joe Brown and Mo Anthoine chose North Cape PolarWear in their bid to become the first men to conquer Trango Tower, 20,530 feet up in the bitter cold of the Himalayas. The fact that

they succeeded says a lot, both for their abilities as climbers and for the qualities of our PolarWear jackets.

In 1977,

North Cape PolarWear was selected by John Ridgway and his crew for their entry in the round the world yacht race. Their yacht became stuck in pack ice near the South Pole

and although they finished last, they might not have finished at all without the PolarWear.

In 1979, a French expedition of 80 climbed the South West face of K2, the world's second highest mountain. It is noted that storms and winds strike K2 with exceptional intensity, so we were flattered when our PolarWear was chosen for the attempt.

PolarWear was also used by Chris Bonington and Doug Scott on the '77 Ogre expedition and is used by major oil companies on the North Sea oil platforms.

For all that it does and has done, North Cape PolarWear is far from expensive.

We think that our prices, like our clothes, will leave you with a nice warm feeling.



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PolarWear undertrousers

PolarWear.



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Wild Gear Survey Bushwalking Boots



	Weight pr size 8/42	Upper height	Welt	Midsole(s)	Insole	Outer sole (all are rubber) lug depth mm	Major Upper component(s)	Backstay Lining	Lacing	Sizes (1/2 size increments)	Features Use	Appx retail price
Blundstone Australia												
Tramper V853	1.48 kg	13 cm	Dv	None	Ri	Traction Tread 8	None 3 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea front	Eyelets	G,P	5-11 L \$ 35
Mountain Master 658	1.52	13	Lf	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Ri	Vibram 7	Wood 3 full grain Lea	Wide	Lea front	Eyelets	G,P	4-13 Ftb,Vsc M-H \$ 49
Mountain Master 677	1.64	17	Lf	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Ri	Vibram 7	Wood 3 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea front	Eyelets	G	(4-10 1/2), 11-13 Ftb M-H \$ 53
Brixia Italy												
Montana	1.45	14	Os	1 EVA foam	Fib	Vibram 5	Steel 2 Pu coated split Lea	Narrow	Lea	D-rings, hooks	G,P	35-47 Lsc L-M \$ 77
Brianza	2	13.5	N	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Cl	Vibram Montagna 7	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea	D-rings, hooks	G,P	(3 1/2-12) M-H \$ 89
Grigna	2.16	17	N	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Lea	Vibram Montagna 7	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea	D-rings, hooks	1G, 1P	39-47 Lsc H \$ 98
Karrimor/Asolo Italy												
KSB-3	1.2	14	Cb	None	Fib	Kiets stud, lug 5	Steel 6 nylon fabric, suede	Medium	Wool felt	D-rings, hooks	G,P	(3-13) Afb,Ssc L-M \$ 99
Trail	1.8	14.5	N	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Lea	Vibram Montagna 7	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea	Eyelets, hooks	G,P	(3-13) Lsc M-H \$139
Kastinger Austria												
Soft	1.2	12	Os	1 EVA, 1 Syn	Fib	Kastinger 5	Steel 1 Pu coated split Lea	Medium	Lea	D-rings, hooks	G,P	(3 1/2-12) Fhp,Lac L-M \$107
Neustift	1.44	11	Os	1 Synthetic	Fib	Kastinger 7	Steel 2 waxed split Lea	Narrow	Lea	Hooks	G,P	(3 1/2-12) Fhp,Lac L-M \$102
Santis	1.32	11	Os	1 Synthetic	Fib	Kastinger 5	Steel 1 Pu coated split Lea	Narrow	1/4 Lea	Hooks	G,P	(3 1/2-12) Fhp,Lac L-M \$ 96
Raichle Switzerland												
Weggis	1.45	10.5	Cb	None	Fib	Raichle 6	Steel 3 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea	Hooks	G,P	36-46 Fhp,Sac L-M \$ 95
Verzasca	1.6	14	Os	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Lea	Vibram 4	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Wide	Lea	Hooks	G,P	36-47 Fhp,Lac M \$115
Murren	1.85	14.5	N	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Fib	Vibram 8	Steel 2 flesh out full grain	Narrow	Lea	D-rings, hooks	G,P	38-47 Lsc M-H \$129
Rossi Australia												
Scrub 4001	1.37	12.5	Os	1 Lea, 1 Rub	None	Hiker 7	Steel 3 full grain Lea	Narrow	Linen front	Eyelets	G	(3-12) Lsc L-M \$ 50
Hawk 4005	1.53	12.5	Os	1 Lea, 1 Rub	None	Hiker 7	Steel 3 full grain Lea	Narrow	1/4 Lea, linen front	Eyelets, hooks	G,P	(4-12) Lac L-M \$ 62
Falcon 435	1.64	11	Os	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Lea	Hiker 7	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea	Eyelets	G,P	(4-12) Lac M-H \$ 68
Eagle 425	1.77	18	Os	1 Lea, 1 Rub	None	Sherpa 7	Steel 3 full grain Lea	Narrow	1/4 Lea, linen front	Eyelets	G,P	(5-12) Atp,Lsc M \$ 91
Scarpa Italy												
Trekker 508	1.3	13.5	Cb	None	Lea	Skywalk stud, lug 6	Steel 8 nylon fabric, suede	Wide	Lea	D-rings	P	36-47 Afb,Lsc L-M \$ 79
Budawang 845	1.45	12.5	Cb	None	Lea	Skywalk Bavaria 5	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Medium	Lea	Hooks	G,P	34-47 Fhp,Lac L-M \$ 79
High Country 106	1.45	13.5	Cb	None	Lea	Skywalk Bavaria 5	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Medium	Lea	Hooks	G,P	36-47 Fhp,Lac L-M \$ 82
Backpacker 036	1.9	13	L	1 Lea, 1 Rub	Lea	Skywalk Fitzroy 6	Steel 1 full grain Lea	Narrow	Lea	Eyelets, hooks	G,P	36-47 Lsc M-H \$108

● **Weight** is given in kilograms for a pair of size 8/42 boots. **Welt construction:** C cement bonded D direct vulcanized L Littleway N Norwegian O outside stitch-down **Materials:** Cl compressed leather fibre Fib fibre board Lea leather Pu polyurethane Rub rubber Ri Reconstituted leather in a latex base Tongue G gusseted P padded **Features:** Afb anatomic foot bed Atp achilles tendon pad Fhp foam heel pad Ftb foam foot bed Lac leather ankle cuff Lsc padded leather scree collar Sac padded synthetic ankle cuff Ssc padded synthetic scree collar Vsc padded vinyl scree collar **Recommended use:** L light M medium H hard

WHAT MAKES A GOOD BUSHWALKING BOOT and what type of boot will best satisfy your individual requirements and expectations? This article aims to explain the different methods of construction, design and materials that are used in the manufacture of boots and how these determine a boot's function and durability.

Welt Construction. The welt is the point at which the upper is attached to the sole. Five different methods of welt construction are represented in the boots surveyed. **Cemented.** The upper is folded under the mid-sole and cement bonded under pressure directly to the outer sole. This method is used exclusively for lightweight, flexible boots. When executed correctly, using modern adhesives, this type of welt will normally outlast the useful life of the uppers.

Direct Vulcanized. Very similar in appearance and performance to a cemented welt. The upper and insole are bonded by heat and pressure to the outer sole as it is being formed from molten material. **Outside Stitch-down.** This type of welt results in a light- to medium-weight boot with a flexible sole and is sometimes constructed without an insole. To be dependable it must feature at least two rows of stitching. The outer sole can be easily replaced when worn. **Littletway.** Also known as Blake or inside stitched, a Littletway welt is very durable because the stitching is not exposed to abrasion. There should be at least two rows of stitching, or one row of stitching combined with a row of nails. This can be checked by peeling back the sock liner. If two or more mid-soles are used and not trimmed close to the upper, they should be stitched together near the edge of the welt to prevent them separating. This is called fair-stitching. The outer sole can be replaced. **Norwegian.** Generally recognized as the strongest method of constructing a welt, it is also the heaviest and most expensive to manufacture. Both the mid-soles and outer sole can be replaced.

Insoles and Shanks. The insole, usually unseen under a sock liner or heel pad, is the heart of the boot around which the sole and upper are joined. The best insoles are made from a single piece of hard, thick leather. Cheaper insoles made from compressed leather or other fibres are usually not as durable.

Hidden under the insole, just beneath the arch of the foot, there should be a thin, narrow length of wood or steel. This is the shank; it is normally 1 to 2 cm wide and approximately 8 cm long. The shank's function is to prevent the sole flexing at its narrowest point (under the arch) and to ensure it flexes at its widest point (under the ball of the foot, where the foot itself flexes). Boots with a correctly positioned shank will provide superior support to the foot in rugged terrain. A steel

shank is preferable as wooden shanks are often not rigid enough.

Boots designed for mountaineering usually incorporate a longer 'full length' shank to eliminate all sole flexibility — that, however, is another story.

Mid-soles. These are found only in boots with stitched welts. The mid-sole is that part of the sole to which the upper is sewn. The number and nature of the mid-soles used will affect the overall weight of the boot, its flexibility and, most importantly, the degree of support and protection it will provide. The best light- and medium-weight boots usually have two mid-soles, a leather one next to the upper and a rubber (or similar) one next to the outer sole. Stiffer, heavier boots can have up to three mid-soles, two leather and one rubber. Several boots in the survey have mid-soles of EVA foam, the same as used in running shoe soles. This is a recent development in walking boots and while it offers excellent cushioning, its durability as a mid-sole material is, as yet, unproven.

Outer Soles. All the leather boots in the survey have rubber lug outer soles. Lug depth varies between 4 mm and 8 mm. Outer soles with shallower lugs are obviously lighter, and are therefore most commonly found on the light- and medium-weight boots. Deep lug soles do wear longer but are also heavier. They are normally used on the more durable medium- and heavy-weight boots.

Many different types of rubber compounds can be used in the manufacture of outer soles. As a general rule of thumb, the softer the rubber, the better the grip but quicker the wear.

Upper Construction and Design. How high? Ankle-high uppers extending around 10 cm to 14 cm above the boot bed are sufficient to provide adequate support for most ankles. Higher topped boots are prone to sag with time, resulting in large wrinkles that can irritate the foot, ankle or Achilles tendons.

How many pieces? Uppers made from one piece of leather are out on their own. With a one-piece upper there are no overlapping seams to wear out and a minimum of stitch holes to let water in. Uppers made from more than one piece of leather should have the overlap of the seams oriented so that it does not easily catch on rocks and other obstacles.

Backstays. Almost all boots have a seam down the back of the heel. The piece of leather that covers this seam is called the backstay. Wider backstays that extend round the sides of the heel are not desirable on boots that will be used in rough country because they 'catch' a lot of wear and soon come adrift. Narrow backstays are a better idea as they remain protected

behind the foot.

Heels and toes. To provide adequate support for the heel and ankle it is essential that a boot have a firm reinforced heel that resists sideways forces. This shaped reinforcing material is called a heel counter, and can be of various materials including stiffened leather or plastic. All boots in the survey were judged to have adequate heel counters in relation to their intended use.

Similar reinforcing of the toe is known as a toe box, and is desirable but not essential if you plan to use your boots in rocky terrain. Steel toe boxes are not necessary unless you get a kick out of dropping boulders on your toes.

Linings. Most boots are lined to some degree. Lining improves comfort (if installed without wrinkles), adds to the strength of the upper and, if used to best advantage, sandwiches the heel counter and toe box between itself and the upper. When used in this fashion it eliminates the need for a wide wrap-around backstay that would otherwise contain the heel counter.

Tongues. Padded tongues are a definite plus as they provide cushioning from firmly tied laces. Gusseted tongues are also worth while; they not only inhibit the penetration of water, but also welcome intruders such as gravel, twigs and leeches. Most boots have a single tongue that is both padded and gusseted.

Scree collars and ankle cuffs. A scree collar is a soft foam-filled collar that encircles the top of the upper above ankle height. Its function is to prevent pebbles from slipping inside and to cushion the leg from the, often hard, edge of the upper.

An ankle cuff is a scree collar that has been extended to below the ankle. Its function is purely comfort and is mostly appreciated by those people who aren't familiar with the sensation of wearing boots.

To be durable, scree collars and ankle cuffs should be covered with heavy duty reinforced vinyl or, better still, quality lightweight leather.

Stitching. Like any product put together on a sewing machine, you can tell a lot about the care with which a boot is made by taking a close look at the stitching. All seams on the upper should be sewn with fine thread and small stitches. Coarse thread and large stitches stand proud of the leather and are thus more susceptible to abrasion. Strong, rot-proof threads such as nylon, polyester or Dacron should be used throughout.

Leather Quality. The strength and water resistance of the uppers depends not only on good design and workmanship but also on the quality of the leather.

The hide, as it comes from the cow, is usually too thick to be used for boot uppers and must be split into thinner sheets. Two sheets normally

result from this process: the leather in the top sheet (the skin side) is called full grain (or top grain) and the bottom sheet is called split.

Full grain leather is the strongest, most water resistant and most desirable leather for uppers. It can be used smooth side out (skin side) or rough side out (flesh side). Most boot makers put the smooth side out as this is naturally the more waterproof side. Alternatively with the rough side out, the smooth side is protected from abrasion and will retain its water resistant qualities longer.

Split leather is not as strong or water resistant due to its more porous structure. It can be of various qualities depending on its thickness, the quality of the original hide, and the type of surface treatment (if any) that it has been given. Without any surface treatment split leather is easily recognizable as it has a suede appearance on both sides. It is most commonly used where light weight or economy is important.

Sometimes split leather is coated with a layer of polyurethane plastic. This can be very difficult to identify as it results in a finish that closely resembles smooth top grain. Polyurethane coatings improve both the appearance and strength of split leather and are practically waterproof. Unfortunately they greatly reduce the leather's natural 'breathability', can often delaminate and peel off and, worst of all, fool the unwary who think they are buying top grain.

The New Lightweight. The past decade has seen an unprecedented revolution in the development of running shoes. The present decade is witnessing a similar revolution in the development of lightweight walking boots. The same aims; to improve comfort, support, protection and at the same time reduce overall weight. The same means; application of new fabrics, new plastic foams, new sole patterns and an emphasis on innovative design.

Two of the new breed are already available in Australia; the Karrimor/Asolo KS-B and the Scarpa Trekker. Both these boots feature foam-backed nylon uppers with split leather reinforcing patches, removable anatomic foam foot beds, wedge heels and a totally new sole pattern that combines both lugs and studs. Before long we will be seeing similar boots with Gore-Tex uppers.

As exciting as these new developments are, it must be remembered that these new generation boots are, at present, only lightweight styles. As such, they are not the best choice for those of us who give our boots punishing use by carrying heavy loads in hard country, often for extended periods. For that type of use, solid leather boots will be with us for a while yet. ●

Alan Spendlove and Jurgen Zingler



Fitzroy
Volume: 2400 cu in
Dimensions: 7 x 12 x 28 inches
Weight: 4 lbs
Fabric: 11 oz Cordura® or 8 oz Pack cloth with 11 oz Cordura® double bottom

Triolet
Volume: 3400 cu in
Dimensions: 8 x 14 x 30 inches
Weight: 4 lbs 6 oz
Fabric: 11 oz Cordura® or 8 oz Pack cloth with 11 oz Cordura® double bottom

Expedition
Volume: 4300 cu in
Dimensions: 8 x 16 x 30 inches
Weight: 8 oz Pack cloth-4 lbs 8oz
11 oz Cordura®-5 lbs 2oz
Fabric: 11 oz Cordura® or 8 oz Pack cloth with 11 oz Cordura® double bottom

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Weight: 7 lb 14 oz
Fabric: 8oz packcloth



Lowé Mountain Packs

Lowe equipment is available from: **Sydney** Mountain Designs, Mountain Equipment, Norski, **Melbourne** Bush & Mountain Sports, Bushgear, Eastern Mountain Centre, Mountain Designs, Nordic Ski and Backpacking, **Brisbane** Jim the Backpacker, Mountain Experience, **Canberra** Bushgear, **Adelaide** The Scout Shop & Outdoor Centre, Thor Adventure Equipment.

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Equipment

• **Ski News.** If the 1982 skiing trade shows were any indication, we can expect one or two interesting new products on sale in the shops this winter. Robbie Kilpinen is importing and distributing Carell ski touring boots, including one model in particular that is likely to be of interest to *Wild* readers. Described as the Amateur model for recreational skiers, it features a high, Velcro-closing snow cuff, wool lining and Skywalk Touring Norm 50 and 75 millimetre soles.

Kilpinen is also distributing the Ski-Fix ski clamp. This ingenious Finnish device holds skis and poles together properly for easy carrying and is small enough to carry in your pocket when not in use.

Following the report in our winter 1982 issue, EMA Pty Ltd is now importing and distributing an even heavier and sturdier Vasque ski touring boot. The Telemark Back-country has a one-piece upper of full grain leather and Vibram soles with 75 millimetre Touring Norm pin holes which are reinforced with a steel plate insert. They will retail for about \$150 a pair.

• **Flasher.** The Strobe-Ident ST-1 is a high intensity, battery powered flashing light designed for rescue and emergency use. The light flashes about once a second and, it is claimed, can be seen up to ten kilometres



away. It is also claimed that the light has a continuous service life of 12 hours. The flash is produced in a xenon filled tube similar to those used in photographic flash equipment. The ST-1 weighs 245 grams and is distributed by Gefo Australia Pty Ltd.

• **Seedless.** For orienteers, rogainers or in fact anybody in search of an ultra-lightweight gaiter, Torre Mountain Craft has designed just that. Made of lightweight, ripstop, breathable nylon, they are intended to keep grass seeds and other nasties out of your socks but are not particularly waterproof. An unusual seal allows them to be used with boots or running shoes. The RRP is \$10.

Tom Millar

• **Mates.** A Canadian company is producing devices called Buddies for rockclimbing protection. They have remarkable similarities with Wild Country's Friends which have quickly gained universal acceptance from climbers. With only two cams, instead of four as with Friends, the effectiveness of Buddies in uneven or flaring placements is severely restricted. It is claimed that they will not become irretrievably jammed as often as Friends, but climbers are unlikely to see this claimed advantage offsetting their obvious placement limitations. Size three retails for \$35. Torre Mountain Craft distributes them in Australia.

• **American Packs.** Just released on the Australian market are the American MEI (Mountain Equipment Incorporated) packs. They are available in travel and rucksack models. The top models have an Air-Flex suspension system which, it is claimed, gives the coolness of an external frame with the comfort of an internal one. They are stocked by Norski, Sydney.

• **Billies.** New from Trangia, through Kar-rimor Australia Pty Ltd, are two robust, nesting billies (1.75 and 2.5 litres) with locking handles and packing strap. RRP \$19.95. Optional stuff sack RRP \$3.50.



• **Hands Up.** Norsewear's fingerless gloves of grey flecked rag wool (RRP \$8.70 a pair) join their popular gloves, balaclavas and jumpers. Distributed by Kar-rimor Australia.

• **Edelrid Climbing Ropes.** The advertisement on the back cover of our previous issue for these well-known and widely trusted ropes should have included an Australian address to contact for information or a full brochure and specifications: Kar-rimor Australia Pty Ltd, PO Box 135, Beaconsfield, NSW 2015.

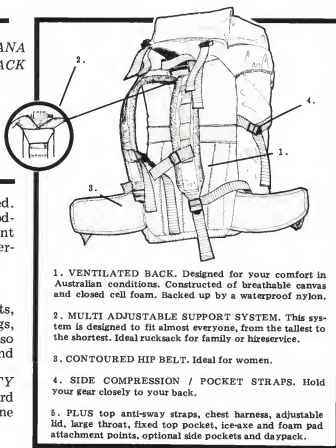


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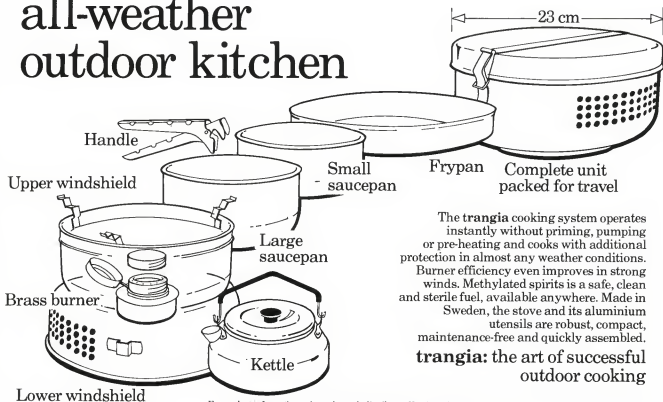
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Reviews

Huts of the High Country by Klaus Hueneker (ANU Press, 1982, RRP \$24.95).

Anyone who has tried to walk or ski through the Snowy Mountains knows how extensive they are. And many visitors have experienced the harsh weather of the high country.

Over the years a variety of people have spent time in the Snowies: aborigines hunting, Europeans exploring, stockmen grazing cattle, miners, dingo trappers, dam builders and skiers. But through all the changes the mountains have continued to cast their spell over visitors and challenge walkers and skiers.

Klaus Hueneker has gone a long way towards expressing the spirit of the Snowies. He has carried out careful, sensible research to outline the historical background of the huts, old mines and characters of the Kosciuszko region.

Hueneker is already well known for his photographs of the Alps, and when these are combined with his text the result is a fine book with hours of good reading and authoritative information. *Huts of the High Country* records the author's own experiences in the mountains, and it is obvious he knows them well.

Hueneker's thorough spade work has turned up some fascinating by-ways in the history of the area. For example, he gives details of Wragges Observatory, the weather observation station built in 1898 on the summit of Mt Kosciuszko itself, and manned by three men year round until 1902. The building stood until 1914, when it was destroyed by lightning. Among the visitors to the hut was a Mr Gainford — the first person to push, ride and carry a bicycle to the top of Mt Kosciuszko!

There are also accounts of tragedies in the mountains: Seaman and Hayes near Kosciuszko in 1928, Graeme Edenborough near Cup and Saucer in 1972, and the tragedy of Kunama Hut. The ruins of Kunama, a stone hut, can still be seen near the saddle between Mt Northcote and Mt Clark. In July

1956 Roslyn Wesche was killed when an avalanche raced down Mt Clark and wiped the hut off its foundations. The path of the avalanche was no more than 50 metres across.

Each hut has its story, and each is full of surprises. In the wake of the controversy surrounding proposals to eliminate some huts, Hueneker has done a thorough job cataloguing information on the huts — of which there is a large number.

Feats of endurance have not been neglected. Of these there are many, but Robbie Kilpinen's record ski from Perisher to Kiandra is worth a mention. In 1964, after a heavy training schedule covering two winters, Kilpinen took advantage of excellent snow conditions to ski the distance in a little over eight hours at his first attempt. A remarkable feat, and no one has come near it since.

The Snowy Mountains have a lore and mystique of their own, and this volume will be sought by anyone who has been touched by their magic.

Brian Walters

The Gift of the Forest edited by Jutta Hosel, Rosemary and Robert Brissenden (Australian Conservation Foundation/Currey O'Neil, 1982, RRP \$19.95).

This is a magnificent collection of outstanding colour photographs and literature (mainly poetry) depicting the wonders of our forests. It is a collection of the work of many photographers, poets and writers with talents as diverse as those of Judith Wright and Peter Carey.

The production of the book is of an unusually high standard. It is hard to imagine the bookshelf of any Australian wilderness lover not including *The Gift of the Forest*.

Chris Baxter

Granite Wilderness: Granite Belt National Parks by Errol Walker (International Colour Productions, 1982). Available from E Walker, 36 Hale Haven Drive, Stanthorpe, Qld 4380,

for \$14.95 post free).

When reviewing books about Australia's wilderness there are occasional revelations: an unknown region, new perspectives, novel experiences. This book provides just such a pleasant revelation. It comprises Errol Walker's photographic exploration of the granite belt area along the New South Wales and Queensland borders. Strange formations, waterfalls and hardy flora are the key features of this wilderness.

The book is concerned with five Parks, including Bald Rock, (the third largest rock in Australia and its summit stands at a breezy 1,277 metres). In the Boonoo Boonoo Park are the 210 metre Boonoo Boonoo Falls, a cascading ribbon of water on a 60° angle.

Walker is a sensitive photographer with some fine images. The slim volume is supported by very little text and (sadly) no maps. *Granite Wilderness* is a tantalizing account of this weather-sculptured region.

BR

Equipment for Bushwalking and Mountaineering (The Melbourne University Mountaineering Club, third edition 1982, RRP \$8.00).

This revised edition of the MUMC's classic reference has been a very long time in coming. Substantial (144 pages), with colour covers and much updated information, it is clearly an important Australian wilderness reference.

But there is something of an out-of-date 'feel' to this book. This may be due to retention of the original format, the use of some 'stale' photos and rather folksy illustrations. Closer examination reveals that not all the information is as up-to-date as it might be. For example, in the section on packs the examples cited are generally brands that were common some years ago and are not necessarily readily available today. Similarly, the comments about climbing harnesses and boots reveal an out-of-date approach.

It would have been good to have seen fewer typesetting errors and a list of suggested references.

However, it would be unrealistic to deny the basic common sense, soundness and good value of this book. It's hard to do without it if you plan to visit our bush or mountains, particularly if you are a novice.

CB

Wilderness edited by Vance Martin (Findhorn Press, 1982, RRP \$9.95).

There is a story about an African chief who, when a European asked him who owned a particular piece of land replied, 'The many who have lived here in the past, the few who live here now and the many who will live here in the future'.

The traditions and culture of the African people were, in bygone days, interwoven with wilderness. For many centuries the African was a pastoral farmer and hunter, and there were no laws to protect the fauna and flora against injudicious human use of the environment because there was no need for such laws.

Bald Rock Creek in the Girraween National Park. Photo by Errol Walker, reproduced from *Granite Wilderness*. Right, snow gums on Mt Franklin in the Brindabella Ranges near Canberra. Photo by Colin Tetterdell, reproduced from *The Gift of the Forest*.







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Following colonization and the Industrial Revolution, lifestyles of people have become more and more divorced from their 'natural' habitat. And with increasing demand for resources the natural balance of nature has been violently disrupted.

Today there is world-wide concern about rapidly diminishing resources and it has become clear that laws and careful management are necessary to preserve what little we have left. At Cairns in 1980 this concern for our remaining wilderness areas was discussed at the second World Wilderness Conference.

Speaking at the conference, New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service Director, Mr Geoff Armstrong, said that when dealing with a resource as limited, endangered and valuable as wilderness it would be presumptuous, if not delinquent, of any representative of 'the few who live here now' to make decisions which would needlessly destroy values which should be available for our children and 'the many who will live here in the future'.

The conference, addressed by many well-known scientists and environmentalists, examined the interplay of the scientific, ecological, social, cultural and spiritual aspects of our world's wide places. Vance Martin has edited what he believes were the most important contributions to the conference for a book simply entitled *Wilderness*.

The overall impact is on the consciousness. It questions the direction the world is heading as man separates himself further from his natural environment and loses sight of its life-supporting qualities. The book is timely. Decisions being made now will have far-reaching effects on the existence of wilderness in the future.

In our highly urbanized and materialistic society many people view wilderness as areas of no real value. *Wilderness* highlights not only the spiritual benefits of wilderness but the scientific and ecological necessity of maintaining it. We are reminded that it was yesterday that gave us today and it is today that will give us tomorrow.

Deirdre Martin

The Mountain Men text by James Cowan, photographs by Colin Beard (Reed, 1982, RRP \$19.95).

This is an interesting and visually attractive account of visits the author and photographer made to men of the mountain country of New South Wales and Victoria in the south-eastern corner of Australia.

It records something of the oral tradition of the early pioneers and their families, and something of the hardship, danger and loneliness they endured in remote areas. There are meetings with many old timers, accounts of time spent with men mustering cattle on the Bogong High Plains and talks with some who, for one reason or another, still live deep in the past.

That the pictures are more enjoyable than the text may be because Colin Beard sets out simply to record the beauty and grandeur that is there, and the men and animals he met, while James Cowan attempts to prove something about a separate Australian culture.

The superb photography and its reproduction would merit *The Mountain Men* a place on the coffee tables of those who have an interest in the High Plains, their peaks and their valleys. The author is keenly observant and his story is at all times readable. The

book is enlivened by conversations with, and intimate pictures of, this generation of mountain men, their horses and their dogs, at work, at ease and not least at their ablutions.

The modern 'mountain men' are depicted as a race apart, a description increasingly difficult to maintain in the face of intrusion by publicity, people and modern facilities. The controversial issue of cattle grazing on the high country receives some attention, but the more divisive and urgent issue of the damage caused to mountain country by the invasion of trail bikes and four-wheel-drive vehicles (not to mention their drivers and passengers) is scarcely mentioned.

This may be because the writer and photographer used such vehicles extensively in producing this book.

There is perhaps unintentional humour in the magnificent horse laugh facing the author's Introduction with its references to 'urban hedonists masquerading as nature lovers', and a call for 'a law protecting indigenous races from moralising conservationists'.

While not intended as a guide, the absence of maps of the area, other than one little larger than a postage stamp, might be regretted by some people. There are errors in the captions of some pictures, such as the picture of the Viking incorrectly identified as 'Mt Cobbler'. This and numerous other inaccuracies may flow from a wish to take hasty advantage of public interest created in the theme of the successful film *The Man from Snowy River*.

CB

Australian Wildflowers by Sue Forrester and John Brownlie (Currey O'Neil, 1982, RRP \$15.95).

This book is another product of the publishing world's recent interest in producing 'glossies' on plants and the natural environment. During the past ten years so many texts, specific and general, have been printed that it is difficult to know which to recommend to people who have only recently become interested in outdoor subjects.

One would expect that, for another book to be produced within the broad category of Australian wildflowers, it must be either beautifully illustrated or have a format that fulfils a new role. The photographic plates in *Australian Wildflowers* are certainly beautiful, but not outstanding. However, by careful division of the text, it presents a pleasant introduction to its subject. The authors have chosen the middle-road approach and provide many colourful photographs of plants in their natural setting, combined with a reasonably thorough introduction to the nomenclature and language of botany in the plant descriptions.

The format is perhaps larger than necessary for practical use. The book is certainly not a field guide for identification purposes, but neither does it fall under the label of 'coffee table' books as the text is informative and covers a wide range of Australian species.

Tasmania continues to suffer from the curious phenomenon of a disappointing lack of reference. Many of its uniquely beautiful specimens, such as the Richeas, leatherwood flowers of the minute flora of the cushion plants, have been overlooked.

But as an attractively presented general introduction to Australian wildflowers this is the sort of book that would make a delightful addition to the shelves of any budding botanist.

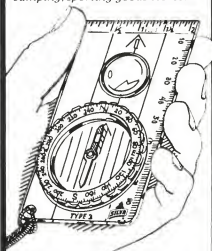
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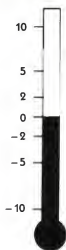
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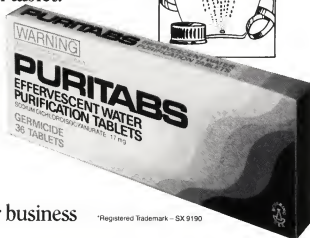
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A Field Guide to the National Parks of Victoria by Alan Fairley (Rigby, 1982, RRP \$22.00).

In Victoria the National Parks Service is a relatively minor body within the public service, and this is reflected by the small number of National Parks in that State. By contrast, the Forests Commission of Victoria is a relatively powerful body, and manages many areas of little significance for forestry but of great recreational value, such as the Gramscans Ranges.

In the past few years there have been significant additions to Victoria's Parks, with Croajalgon (a large coastal park in East Gippsland), the Snowy River National Park and some long overdue alpine Parks, including Bogong National Park.

In some cases the new Parks have been burdened with unnecessary 'facilities' which often compromise their value, but generally management has been more sensitive than that provided by the Forests Commission.

This book, published with the co-operation of the National Parks Service, is a thorough field guide to Victoria's National Parks and other regions managed by the National Parks Service. Alan Fairley has already produced a similar field guide to the Parks of New South Wales, and has compiled a great deal of material, including the historical aspects of each Park, flora and fauna, suggested activities and facilities.

At times Fairley has not checked his material closely enough, as when he cites John Mitchell as the first visitor to the Bogong High Plains in 1843, a myth carefully dismantled by Stephenson in *Cattlemen and Huts of the High Plains*. Nevertheless, the research has been considerable, and it is not surprising that it is packed with interesting snippets of information.

The text is supported by maps and numerous colour plates, generally of good quality and well labelled (although the photograph facing page 273 is not Mt St Philack, as captioned).

In all, the book is good value, whether as a field guide or general reading. Let us hope it leads to a growing pride in Victoria's National Parks, and a more enlightened management of the State's wild places.

BW

Contemplation Calendar 1983 (Peter Ewing Photography, RRP \$5.50).

Western Australia's offering on the wilderness calendar front is unusual in that Peter Ewing's photos, and they are impressive, are reproduced in black and white.

There are two months to each photo which is disappointing, but the photos, mostly close-ups, are of unusual quality.

Available from PO Box 40, Cottesloe, Western Australia 6011 for \$5.50 including postage.

CB

What Animal is That? by Harry Frauca (Doubleday, 1982, RRP \$29.95).

In this book Harry Frauca has set about producing a guide to Australia's animals in one volume. It is an ambitious task, particularly as the subject matter includes insects and spiders, which account for about a third of the book. It describes over 600 species and is well illustrated with colour and black and white photographs.

Naturally enough, it is not possible to deal comprehensively with Australia's fauna in 200 pages, and Frauca does not achieve this. He has produced, however, a useful guide

that outlines the main aspects of each class of Australian fauna and describes the more common examples. It is well indexed and may be used as a home reference work.

BW

The Great Dividing Range by Jeff Toghill (Reed, 1982, RRP \$29.95).

This substantial coffee table publication covers considerable ground: from the tip of Queensland to western Victoria. It is not, primarily, a book about those parts on and around Australia's Great Dividing Range that will be of most interest to the readers of this magazine.

Something of a travelogue, *The Great Dividing Range* is more concerned with the towns than the ranges of the Divide. With a few exceptions, such as an out-of-focus photo of alpine daisies near Mt Hotham, the photography is very good, with some of the photos, like the one of the Budawangs, excellent.

CB

1983 Canoeing Calendar (Australian Canoe Federation, 140 Cotham Road, Kew, Victoria 3101, RRP \$3.95).

This desk-top calendar features photographs of every aspect of the sport, and includes major canoeing dates. Photographic reproduction is not, however, all that it might be in some cases. Proceeds from calendar sales will go to the Australian Canoe Federation, and will help all aspects of canoeing administration.

CB

This is Canoeing by Jane and Roy Farrance (Victorian Canoe Centre, 1982, RRP \$14.95).

At last, a comprehensive Australian canoeing book, based on local conditions! This well written, easy-to-understand book, with over 200 pages and 150 photographs and illustrations, fills a big gap in up-to-date canoeing literature.

The book covers just about every aspect of canoeing, and places great emphasis on safety — from building a boat to paddling. The authors' own love of canoeing comes through strongly with a very positive approach to improving skills, trying different techniques and generally having fun.

Areas peripheral to canoeing are also covered, such as camping in wilderness areas, ethics and conservation.

The section on canoe design, construction and repair is very thorough.

The paddling technique sections cover both kayak and canoe, and as well as the basic strokes, include white water technique and the eskimo roll.

The rapids and river 'reading' section is excellent, with many illustrations and photographs, and describes the International River Grading System.

Safety and rescue are well covered, as is one of the most insidious hazards to canoeists, hypothermia.

Every aspect of canoe sport is described in great detail, from canoe polo to marathon racing.

Where applicable, descriptions/specifications of the boats and equipment used are given, as well as the various classes, rules, training and tactics, organization and skills required. The sections on sea kayaking and surfing, which are relatively new aspects of canoeing, are well covered, with a great deal of information on equipment, the sea, tides and navigation.

The main weakness of the book is that it doesn't offer much for the experienced pad-

dler. It is a comprehensive book suitable for beginner and intermediate paddlers, but is lacking the information, tips and ideas I expected from authors of such wide experience as Jane and Roy Farrance. Of course, not everything can be said in one book; maybe they are planning a follow-up edition.

Overall, this comprehensive canoeing book is good value and is likely to become a standard text for canoeists.

Yvonne McCaughlin

Mt Arapiles: A Rockclimbers' Handbook edited by Kim Carrigan (Victorian Climbing Club, 1983, expected RRP \$16.00).

It is fitting that this should be the *magnum opus* of rockclimbing guides since Mt Arapiles is our best cliff. Approximately 1,300 climbs are described in some 300 pages.

That this is a good professional production is immediately evident. It looks good, reads well and, generally speaking, it is thorough, fair and accurate, and has non-contentious grading. It is almost completely up-to-date, something that few other guides have been when they have been published. Other attributes which lift this guide well above the ordinary are its profusion of good action photos, mainly by Glenn Tempest, excellent photo-diagrams and most useful listing by grade of all climbs above grade 17.

The weaknesses of this excellent guide generally arise from a too-heavy reliance on dubious material from the previous VCC guide, especially at the lower grades. This is particularly so regarding the unfortunate confusion over leaders of first ascents. The emphasis of this guide is on hard climbing, as evidenced by the photo selection, introductions and allocation of stars (for quality), which is pretty 'tight' anyway. A detailed (anecdotal) history will be missed by some, as will a chronological list of first ascents. The explanation of the naming of the hardest climb is not accurate: the name never doubted, once operations on it had commenced, that the line of India would be climbed 'free': the name was a cynical observation on the 'free' climbing methods employed. The proof copy we inspected had a few minor inaccuracies, such as the gross mis-grading of Snorkler and its direct start, and the inaccurate placing of Flop Wall on the map: hopefully these will have been rectified.

Sixteen dollars a lot of money? Yes, but this is one hell of a lot of guide.

CB

Other Titles Received

Indian Mountaineering Spring 1982 (The Indian Mountaineering Foundation).

The Melbourne Walker 1983 (Melbourne Walking Club, RRP \$1.60).

Walk 1983 (Melbourne Bushwalkers, RRP \$2.50).

More Good News for Wild Contributors

We have been paying *Wild* contributors at commercial rates for 12 months. Now we are pleased to be able to announce that from our next issue we will be paying them substantially more.

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Track Notes

The Great South West Walking Track

Sandra Bardwell describes Victoria's magnificent new coastal walking track.



● UNTIL A YEAR OR TWO AGO, THE south-western corner of Victoria had not been widely regarded as a bushwalking area. Lacking mountains, plateaux and ranges, the region appears to have little to offer, although canoeists know the splendour of the lower Glenelg River and naturalists would be aware of the wealth of species in the wide diversity of habitats.

There are also large areas of Crown land controlled by three State government authorities. This fact fired the imagination of a local National Parks Service officer; a plan for a 200 kilometre walking track linking these Parks and reserves was the result. The track would enable walkers to visit an area of dry sclerophyll forest in which the Surrey and Fitzroy Rivers provide startlingly different corridors of dense vegetation. From there, they would continue down the Glenelg River, within a National Park, with extensive limestone cliffs rising sheer from its wide, placid waters. In complete contrast, the next stage along the 60 kilometre beach of Discovery Bay would be a memorable wilderness experience that is followed by a magnificent cliff-top path round Capes Duquesne and Bridgewater, and beach and dune walking along the beautiful crescent-shaped Bridgewater Bay. Finally, the unusual limestone formations at Cape Nelson, a stand of rare soap

mallee and a landslip along the western side of Nelson Bay sustain the variety and interest until the last kilometre of the track.

Moreover, the area is not without its historical associations. Major Sir Thomas Mitchell followed the Glenelg River to its mouth in 1836. The Cape Nelson lighthouse was built in 1884.

The realization of the plan for this, the Great South Western Walking Track, has been made possible by close co-operation between the National Parks Service, Forests Commission and Lands Department and, in particular, by the enthusiasm and energy of the Principal of Portland High School, supported by his staff and by candidates for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. They have worked on track marking and clearing, and the construction of the simple campsite facilities. The Track is to be officially opened later in 1983 but it can now be followed for the full distance.

It has the virtue of adaptability to a wide range of abilities and circumstances. It is not only the preserve of hardy long distance walkers, but it can also be tackled in easy stages by young and old alike. The Moonah Track in particular, between Cape Nelson and the end of the Track near Portland, is well suited to families and all casual visitors to the area.

Stiles, steps and bridges have been constructed wherever necessary, and the Track generally is well marked and signposted (vandalism permitting) with lettered signs, red triangular markers and the Track's own distinctive emu logo.

Information. Up-to-date information about availability of water, likelihood of campsites being full, and printed information about the Parks through which the Track passes, may be obtained from the National Parks Service, South West District Office, 63 Julia Street, Portland, 3305. Telephone (055) 23 3232.

Transport. It would be preferable to arrange to leave private cars in Portland rather than at the start of the Track near the Princes Highway, 12 kilometres north of Portland (GR 549674 Portland). As there is no attractive or safe way of covering the distance on foot, a taxi may be the quickest way of reaching the start. For people undertaking a section of the Track, road maps and National Parks Service brochures show details of the best access routes to strategic points along the Track. Public transport is available from Melbourne, on week days only, either by train to Warrnambool and bus to Portland, or bus direct. Continue on the bus towards Heywood and

Cape Nelson. Erik Westrup

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alight at the start of the Track. Bus transport is also available from Mt Gambier.

Timing. The best times of the year to do the walk are October to early December and late March to early June. During winter and spring, the high level of the waters of the Fitzroy and Surrey Rivers may render some of the forest section impassable. Conditions could be uncomfortably warm during summer for sustained, extended walking. There would also be the threat of fire in the forest and to a lesser extent along the river. Short walks combined with swimming and surfing are recommended instead.

How long? It is possible to cover the distance in seven days, but this rate of travel is not advocated. I think nine or ten days would allow moderate days' walking with time for photography, bird watching and swimming.

Campsites. Each of the 11 campsites has at least one properly constructed fireplace, a toilet and a permanent water supply, provided, in some cases, that tanks are not used for target practice. Firewood is scarce along Discovery and Bridgewater Bay and at The Springs, so a stove should be carried. In the small town of Nelson at about the half-way mark, there is a camping ground and more formal accommodation. Please remember: fires may only be lit in the fireplaces provided, and nowhere at all on days of Total Fire Ban, dogs, cats and firearms are not permitted in National Parks; the Track is for walkers only — horses and motor bikes are not permitted. The management authorities appreciate being advised of the plans of intending visitors: the National Parks Service at Portland; as above, the Forests Commission at Heywood, telephone: (055) 27 1302; the Lands Department (for the section between Discovery Bay and Cape Nelson), telephone: (055) 72 3033.

Refuelling. Nelson has a store with a modest range of supplies, as well as a hotel. There is a kiosk at the western end of Bridgewater Bay which sells take-away food and drinks, mainly on summer week-ends and holidays. Supplies could be mailed to the Nelson post office.

Maps. Division of National Mapping: 1:250,000 series — Portland, Penola. 1:100,000 series — Portland, Nelson; Northumberland and Gambier cover only a tiny section of the Track. Department of Crown Lands and Survey (35 Spring Street, Melbourne). 1:25,000 series: Keegan Bend, Warrwin, Oxbow Lake, Chaucer and Grant Bay, Portland, Dryden, Cape Duquesne, Fisherman Cove, in provisional format only: Lake Mornbeing, Hedditch, together covering all but the forest section of the Track.

The Forest, about 50 kilometres

Campsites (all on Nelson sheet): Cut-out Camp, Surrey River 438733; Cobboboonnee 380775; Fitzroy River 371854 (in summer the flow of the river here may be imperceptible, but it is permanent).

From a flora reserve beside the Highway, the Track weaves a course through predominantly stringybark forest. That the area has been, and still is, a working forest is evident in the varying ages of the stands of eucalypts. Bushfires have swept through the forest recently; differing rates of regeneration of native plants are evident.

Intervales within the forest are very pleasantly provided by the Fitzroy and Surrey Rivers. Ferns and blackwoods cluster close to the valley floors as though a fence had been thrown across the slopes to confine their growth. The open, marshy upper reaches of several streams are filled with tall li-tree and reeds, the haunts of vociferous frogs. Kangaroos and emus are by far the most common wildlife in the forest.

Lower Glenelg National Park, Moleside to Nelson, about 45 kilometres

Campsites (all on Nelson sheet): Moleside 235879; Battersby 140888; Pattersons Cane Camp 050937.

The Track mainly follows the River Road downstream from 208858 (Nelson); Moleside. For the time being, the most direct route to this point from Moleside is beside the bitumen Nelson-Winnap Road. A more attractive but longer route goes round Wild Dog Bend to Sadie Hawkins, a hut site on the bank (218868). Continue a little way along the bank to pick up a path to Pannicran Creek Track which leads to the bitumen, about half a kilometre to the south-west is the turn-off along River Road.

It is planned to route the Track close to the river

by opening sections of foot track where the River Road swings away from its course. Vehicular traffic may be encountered along the road; except on holidays and some week-ends it is not likely to be bothersome.

There are many points from which to enjoy good views of the limestone cliffs rising vertically from the quiet untrifled river, mainly below Sapping Creek (085918). In spring, wildflowers are prolific, while kangaroos and emus are again quite common.

Nelson may be reached by any one of four tracks from the river. The choice may be guided by the location of your next camp (Nelson or Discovery Bay). Unless you have an urge to follow the Victoria-South Australia border (the longest route to Nelson), the most interesting track is that which leads south-west and south from the river opposite the Princess Margaret Rose Caves (approximately 988947 *Gambler*). This little-used, unignited track crosses two sandy valleys filled with grass trees. At the next junction continue along the extension of the E-B Track to the south-east. Then veer left at a T-junction and walk eastwards to the North Nelson Road and into Nelson. Here, cross the Mt Gambier Road and follow a side road, right-angled past the store to Beach Road on the right. Just past the Discovery Bay Coastal Park signboard turn off the bitumen along a track to 'Ocean Beach'.

Discovery Bay, 60 kilometres

Campsites (all on Nelson sheet). White Sands 069538; Lake Monibeong 162792; Swan Lake 272705.

To provide a diversion from this marathon beach walk, an inland track from a point south-east of Nobles Rocks (about 110812) to Lake Monibeong is planned, as is a route from Swan Lake to Bridgewater Lakes via Mt Richmond (National Park).

If you are lucky with the tides, you should enjoy firm sand for the walk to delightful White Sands Camp. Sheltered behind a line of dunes, it is close to permanent water, a miraculous lake in a wide sandy basin. A pump will draw the water up during summer when the surface water disappears. The site is marked by a sign 'White Sands Outlet' where a

streamlet issues from the swampland and crosses the beach. About three kilometres further on, the low ochre-coloured cliffs of Nobles Rocks, fretted and sculptured by the elements, provide a vantage point for contemplating the apparently infinite sands and turbulent surf. Cape Montesquieu, about one and a half hours further south-east, scarcely seems to merit the title, but it is the last break in the beach of Discovery Bay until the cliffs leading to Cape Duquesne.

Firm sand is virtually non-existent along the south-eastern half of the Bay, so it is as much a physical as a mental challenge to complete the walk to Swan Lake. An adjustment of walking pace is necessary, and I found that the distance slipped easily past by constantly setting objectives: the next coloured piece of foilsam; the next odd-shaped sand dune, and so on. Located 1.7 kilometres inland, the Swan Lake campsite lies behind towering pale-coloured dunes, more like alpine peaks than massive piles of sand.

With the features of Cape Duquesne steadily emerging from the perpetual sea haze across the horizon, the last stretch of beach walking is an exhilarating experience.

Cliffs, Capes, Bays — Descartes Bay to Portland, about 45 kilometres

Campsites: The Springs 324540 (Nelson); if the water supply is not working, a natural spring emerging from the cliffs below should yield an ample supply; Bridgewater Bay 398540 (Nelson); Mallee Camp 483481 (Portland).

From the track across the grassy slopes and cliffs flanking the southern shore of Descartes Bay, the inspiring view of the entire shoreline of Discovery Bay makes the relentless plodding along the soft sand seem well worth while. The cliff-top walking to Cape Duquesne and the nearby Petrified Forest is enthralling and is mostly easy going, with the constant diversion of the panoramic views of Discovery Bay and the fringing dunes and hills.

Cape Bridgewater is another outstanding vantage point — high, open and almost invariably breezy. Just before reaching the north-western end of Bridgewater Bay, the Track passes through private

property — please do not interfere with any grazing stock.

Bridgewater Bay is one of the finest on the Victorian coastline, a graceful crescent shape with the waves breaking in similarly curved lines. Other than the hamlet of Cape Bridgewater, there is virtually no sign of disturbance along the Bay.

About three kilometres along the Bay an extensive outcrop of cliffs and bluffs breaks through the steep, scrubby dunes fringing the beach. A track has been cut round this barrier which would probably not be negotiable at sea level even at low tide. More firm sand follows, although the full traverse of Bridgewater Bay is not achieved without another short detour inland. Here again you may savour the pleasure of contemplating a panorama of the day's walk, with all of Bridgewater Bay at your feet.

From Murrells Beach, the Track climbs up through thick vegetation to the cliff-top, and leads southward to join part of the Sea Cliff Nature Walk in Cape Nelson State Park. Lady Julia Percy Island is clearly visible on the horizon as a low, flat-topped feature. Cape Nelson, a black basalt intrusion through the surrounding limestone, and the lighthouse, are outside the State Park.

Cross the bitumen road to the lighthouse to join the final section, the Moonah Track. A proper walking track almost all the way, this is full of surprises. First, it winds through tall stands of wattles, t-trees and the rare soap mallee, and soon emerges on the coast for good views over Nelson Bay. Closely following the cliff edge, the Track undulates quite markedly, a good test for walkers near the end of a 200 kilometre journey. It then swings inland for a few kilometres and meanders through rolling heathland, affording pastoral views across nearby farmland.

The most unusual section of the Moonah Track negotiates a landlip where contorted limestone formations and dense vegetation seem to be escapees from sub-tropical rainforest. Finally, in open country, the Track swings round to the northern shore of Nelson Bay and ends at a path leading down to the Bay. From there, it is about five kilometres along roads and footpaths to the centre of Portland. ●



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Contributors

Earle Bloomfield left the bush at ten years of age and moved to the seaside, at Indented Head. Both Batman and Flinders had landed here and living opposite their monument clearly affected him. He promptly bought a sea kayak, taught himself to paddle, sail and skin dive in all weathers, and hasn't stopped journeying to wild places since.

He worked as a professional outdoor pursuits instructor for eight years and has walked, climbed, canoed, and led treks and expeditions in Britain, France, Italy, Austria, Nepal and Australia.

In 1979, with fellow instructor John Brenster, Earle made the first sea kayak circumnavigation of Tasmania and later was founder President of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club. Stories of his sea kayak adventures



Late last year he published a calendar of his photographs called *Contemplation* in an effort to make people more conscious of West Australia's unique and precious wild places. This is reviewed in this issue.

Craig Nottle is a 21 year old, fourth year medical student at Melbourne University. He began bushwalking and Nordic skiing at school and took up rockclimbing with the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club in 1979. At the end of that year he had his first taste of alpine climbing, in New Zealand, and did a number of good climbs including a solo ascent of a new route on Mt. Brun. Two years later he returned to New Zealand and did a number of major faces and several new routes. His climbs included the North and South Faces of Mt. Hicks and a traverse of Mt. Cook — up the Sheila Face and down the Hooker Face.

In 1982 he had a remarkable season in the European Alps with ascents of climbs including the Dru Culoir (first Australian ascent), Freney Pillar on Mt. Blanc and the Walker Spur. These were 'warm-ups' for his Changabang climb!

Greg Powell was born in Newcastle, New South Wales, in 1950 and did most of his early bushwalking with the Scout Association. He is now District Venturer Leader with West Newcastle District.

Greg specializes in historical bushwalking, researching and retracing the routes of early Australian explorers. Many of these trips are described in his book *Bushwalking in the Blue Mountains* (Rigby, 1980). He has also walked in the Snowy Mountains and Papua New



have appeared in British and Australian magazines, and the official report of his Tasmanian expedition has sold out.

Earle now operates a successful signwriting and engraving business in Mansfield, Victoria, far from the ocean but handy to the next best things, wild rivers and Nordic skiing.

Peter Ewing was born and raised in Kalgoorlie and lives in Perth working as an engineer. He is an active bushwalker and canoeist and all his spare time is spent in the bush, the darkroom or helping to preserve the State's diminishing forests.

The inspiration of Ansel Adams (and other similar photographers) and the Zone System led him to concentrate totally on black and white photography using large format cameras to artistically record the beauty of the bush.

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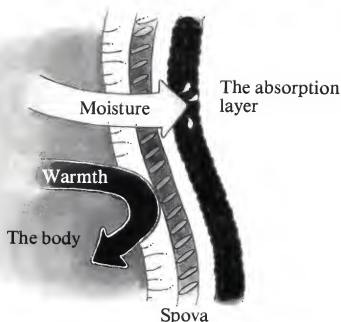
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Guinea (the Kokoda Trail, twice, and Mt Wilhelm, the highest peak).
He is a member of the Blue Mountains Speleo Club, Kosciuszko Huts Association, National Parks Association and Newcastle Bushwalking Club. After bushwalking, his main outdoor pursuits are ski touring, caving and rafting.

Alan Spendlove has been keenly interested in rucksack sports for 16 years. Since he first discovered the agonies and ecstasies of bushwalking in his early teens, he has also become enthusiastic about rockclimbing and both cross country and alpine skiing.

In 1972 Alan joined the Sydney outdoor retailer, Mountain Equipment. The past two years, however, have seen him as the Sales Manager of Blue Mountain Sports (a sister company) distributing the New Zealand made Macpac Wilderness brand of rucksacks, tents and clothing.

Alan's practical experience, concern for good design and a decade of selling outdoor gear make him well qualified to contribute to our survey of walking boots.

Errol Walker was born in Queensland and has a keen interest in bushwalking and an appreciation for nature. This appreciation has attracted him to many Australian and New Zealand National Parks. He has also studied



and photographed native reserves in Wales, Switzerland, Italy and Yugoslavia.

He has produced two books on Queensland's Granite Belt: *Queensland's Granite Belt in Colour* (1972), and *Granite Wilderness* which is reviewed in this issue.

Jürgen Ziegler was born in Berlin, spent his school-days in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps and migrated to Australia in 1959.

A number of overland trips to Europe, including trekking in the Himalayas, followed in the next ten years.

Jürgen joined Mountain Equipment in Sydney in 1969. He was a member of the Sydney Rockclimbing Club for a number of years, has walked in New South Wales and Tasmania and is an enthusiastic Nordic and alpine skier. His other interests include skin diving and photography whenever his job as Managing Director of Mountain Equipment allows him time off which, he complains, is never enough.

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Wildfire

Driving Out Credibility

It is unfortunate that contemptuous journalism such as that exhibited in your editorial of the Oct/Dec issue of *Wild* was ever allowed to reach the press. Such emotional poppycock, based on rumour, innuendo and unsubstantiated claims, does little other than to denigrate an otherwise potentially worthwhile magazine...

Your appraisal of the Howqua-Jamieson river region is curious, especially the generous amount of defamatory, unsubstantiated references to four-wheel-drive vehicles...

In reference to your 'hordes of 4WD vehicles' active in the area — no doubt a figment of your imagination — it should be pointed out... that unlike bushwalkers 4WD vehicles remain only on formed tracks as specified under the Land Conservation Act 1973. It might also be of interest to you to note that the Forest (sic) Commission maintains a system of seasonal road closures, which effectively restricts access and maintains the roads during the winter months when erosion could possibly occur. Furthermore this policy is encouraged and supported by this Association and the 31 clubs it represents...

No doubt it serves your cause to ignore minor problems such as fire access, and the constant need for 4WD access to transport search parties for the numerous lost bushwalkers...

The policy of this Association, unlike many walkers we have had to clean up after, is to take out what we take in. The lack of environmental responsibility in this respect by walkers has been of constant interest to this Association...

This Association also acknowledges the abuse given to our slogan in your photograph. We suggest that the caption is somewhat ludicrous as is the photo of a muddy paddock. To attempt to suggest that they are at such

and-such a location is a deliberate attempt to mislead.

This Association despises your clumsy attempts to belittle our recreation through unsubstantiated claims based on rumour, omission, imagination and unconfirmed reports.

... This Association demands a written retraction and apology in your next issue...

Brian Tanner

President

Victorian Association of

Four Wheel Drive Clubs

Melbourne, Vic

Mr Tanner's emotions appear to have slipped into overdrive and his logic into reverse! The facts referred to in the editorial in question were witnessed by the Editor and another Wild staff member together with a number of other walkers. We saw, for example, more than ten four-wheel-drive vehicles at one time at the Eight Mile Hut site, and dozens at Sheepyard Flat. Another Wild staff member has seen 12 in a group on Mt Clear at the head of the Jamieson Valley.

Mr Tanner's assertion that '4WD vehicles remain only on formed tracks...' is simply incorrect, as, for example, the photo taken at the Bluff Hut shows. (Those present in each case can confirm that our two photos were taken where we claim they were. Further, the Bluff Hut photo can readily be checked against the landscape at the hut. Mr Tanner's claim that our photos were not taken where we claim is therefore also demonstrably untrue.)

We leave it to readers to judge the truth of Mr Tanner's implication that Forests Commission 'seasonal road closures' are effective in preventing erosion caused by four-wheel-drive vehicles, and his claim that these vehicles are needed to search for 'numerous lost bushwalkers'.

As for the issue of cleaning up in the bush,

we can only conclude that in this connection there must be a substantial divergence between the policy and practice of certain four-wheel-drivers!

Chris Baxter
Editor

Fall Out

Have just got around to reading the *Wild* interview with Peter Genders in the spring 1982 issue. I notice that he mentions that 'In New Zealand a guy recently shot the Hooker Falls'.

The name of these falls is a Maori name and the correct spelling is Huka and I think many people would be upset to see it spelt any other way.

Otherwise an excellent magazine!

Kathryn Groome
Christchurch, New Zealand

Stuffed

It is time for a new campaign in Tasmania. There is a threatened species, unique in the world, and only we can save it.

In a changing environment, with new thinking, new structures and new challenges, a public department still in the 19th century is a rare species, constantly in danger of extinction as the 20th century intrudes on its habitat. Carefully isolated by protective governments, one last example still thrives — the Hydro-Electric Commission of Tasmania.

Together we can wonder at this relic of a bygone era, a voracious valley eater and, unless we act to save it, doomed by dams.

For the HEC is running out of places to put dams, and is consuming more and more money in an effort to produce less and less power for which there is no longer any demand.

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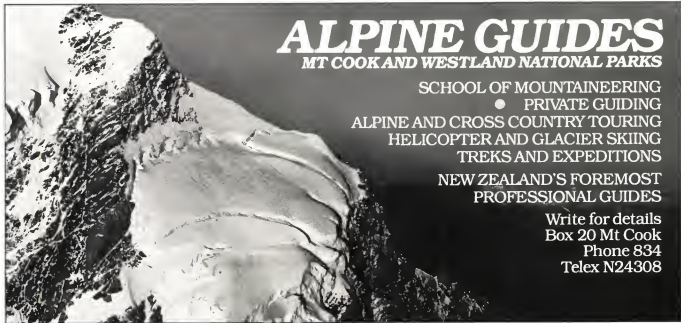
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plates burning in a show of power and solidarity, turn on the fans and air conditioners to cool things down, buy video recorders to record the work of the HEC — and we can all drown with the Commission in one vast communal orgy of glorious worship to the megawatt.

Brian Walters
Port Melbourne, Vic

Pack Dreams

I would like to explode the great backpacking internal frame myth... 'We are not convinced... that the system of crossed alloy staves is as good as parallel ones, particularly where a high degree of mobility is required, as in skiing or mountaineering' (*Wild*, Summer 1983, page 84).

This myth started with an often misinterpreted article by Doug Robinson in *Backpacker* magazine (October 1981, page 43). The truth is that there is a wide array of possible frame shapes, none of which is better or worse than each other when taken in isolation as quoted above. A pack's frame is merely its spine, and what really matters is how its harness (shoulder pads and hip-belt) attaches to that spine. You see, as Doug pointed out, to find the problem with an (American) X-framed pack, 'Simply examine the hip-belt's point of attachment... its hip-belt is invariably attached to those outer legs of the frame'. Avoid that and you have avoided the problem.

The key point of his whole article is that 'The worst threat to a pack's stability is the sideways sway at the shoulders, and the way to quiet it turns out to be in building a lot of independent suspension into the hip-belt'. This paragraph could easily have been written about the new Macpac Liberty Concept. Unlike almost any other brand, its shoulder pads are directly attached to the frame, so sideways sway at the shoulders is eliminated. And how independent is the hip-belt's suspension? Well, it is the only hip-belt in the world that will pivot with your hips, compress and extend with your back while carrying your load.

It is Doug Robinson's dream, X-frame and all.

Bruce McIntyre
Manager
Macpac Products (NZ) Ltd
Christchurch, New Zealand

High Australians

Just finished reading my summer *Wild*... delighted to see more pages and colour!

Your Himalayan information mentions Fred From's fine achievement on Lhotse. Interestingly From missed out on being the first Australian mountaineer to pass the magic 8,000 metre mark by over half a century!

In 1922 George Ingle Finch was with Geoffrey Bruce on an attempt on Everest, reaching 8,300 metres in a summit bid, a record altitude for the time. Unlike From, Finch used a rudimentary oxygen apparatus.

He also wrote *The Making of a Mountaineer* in 1924 and, apart from his youth, spent most of his life in the United Kingdom, being President of the Alpine Club from 1959 to 1961. He died in 1970 being aged over 80 years.

Hugh Foxcroft
Toorak, Vic

Readers' letters are welcome. A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be published. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Victoria 3181.

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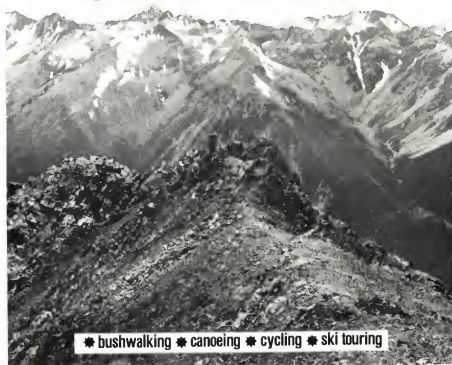
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The Victorian Climbing Club meets at 8 pm on the last Thursday of each month (except December, and second last Thursday in September) at 188 Gatehouse Street, Parkville 3052. Visitors and new members interested in rockclimbing are welcome. Contact the Secretary, GPO Box 1725P, Melbourne, Victoria 3001.

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Issue 2 Parks survey, bushwalking the Divide, Mt Bogong in winter, canoeing the Shoalhaven, Kim Carrigan, caving.

Issue 3 Rucksack survey, Tasmania's south coast, high plains skiing, types of canoeing, Himalayan climb, Milo Dunphy, track notes; Blue Mountains canyons.

Issue 4 Sleeping bag survey, the Franklin, Flinders Ranges, XC ski bases, Nymboida River, Mt Aspiring climb, orienteering, photo contest, track notes; Powelltown railways, Macdonnell Ranges.

Issue 5 Cross country ski survey, walking in Queensland and in New Zealand, cross country downhill, canoeing the Mitta Mitta, Reinhold Messner, bushwalking with a baby, track notes; Blue Mountains.

Issue 6 Stoves survey, Stirling Ranges walk, ski tour from Kiandra to Kosi, Peter Genders, Dombrovskis photos, El Capitan climb, Tasmanian caves, track notes; Budawang, Reedy Creek Gorge.

Issue 7 Canoe survey, Western Arthurs, Bob Brown, Snowy Mountains ski touring, kayak roll, rock women, family walking, track notes; Snowy River, Mt Howitt area.

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